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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ARRINGTON).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 25, 2018.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JODEY C. ARRINGTON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 8, 2018, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as we recover from the chaos emanating from the White House and the tweeter-in-chief last week, it is important to recognize children are not invaders. Children must not be used as political pawns for reckless immigration enforcement policy.

I thank JUSTIN AMASH for being a lonely, but principled Republican voice, reminding your colleagues, even if Donald Trump doesn't recognize the Fifth Amendment, that under the Constitution, nobody is denied of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.

There are over 300 other Republicans in the House and Senate, and I hope America hears from them. And Democrats should welcome a contest of ideas and a contest at the ballot box, not shouting at restaurants.

It is important that we don't lose sight of the bigger picture. There is a reason that tens of thousands of people have come to the southern border: the chaos and violence in parts of Mexico, especially Central America, and the violence especially strong in the triangle of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

The United States is not an entirely innocent bystander there. We have supported repressive dictators in those countries in the 1980s, and we have been meddling in their affairs for generations.

It is the lucrative American drug market that has fueled the drug trade and gang activity. Part of our failed drug policies have destabilized the lives of millions. The immense profits from the American drug trade drives that activity to the borders, corrupts governments, and has created a situation where we cannot even keep drugs and cell phones out of American prisons.

What is the answer? I would suggest that it is not to deny people fearing for their lives a right to prove their case as refugees seeking asylum. The answer is not to hold children hostages in a macabre, hateful drama that is a shame on all Americans.

The answer is not to forcibly take children out of the arms of their mother, and then lose them in the system. I mean, wait a minute. If the Postal Service and UPS can tell you where the sweat socks and the razors that you ordered a week ago are in the system, why can't we tell parents where their most precious possession, their children, are—and the notion that some are walking away from detention facilities.

The Trump administration is talking about reorganizing essential government departments. Maybe if they want to do that, they ought to start with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement. They ought to start with the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Health and Human Services, all of the agencies that are a part of this embarrassing spectacle, to figure out how to do it right, how to do it humanely, in an open and transparent fashion, and stop the notion that somehow there will be zero tolerance; that we will separate children from their families at the borders; and we will criminalize people who are seeking asylum.

Let's stop this malignant policy. Let's get children back to their parents. Let's elevate the discourse respectfully, but forcefully battle ideas and support the vulnerable.

It is not merely a question of justice for immigrant children, but of justice and integrity of all Americans.

TIME TO TACKLE THE DILEMMA OF IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, ''Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.''

For those who are not familiar with the insights of Dr. Seuss, that quote concludes ''The Lorax.'' You see, when I got home on Friday night, my 8-year-old wanted to watch a move with dad. We watched ''The Lorax'' with him belly laughing at some of the scenes and me just enjoying him curled up beside me, happy to be together at home.

Playing through my mind also—as it has for some time—was our collective struggle with legal immigration and our Nation's struggle with addressing this problem.

For anyone wondering if I did not see or feel the real painful events of separating children from their parents at the border last week, as I curled up with my little guy, know that I did. I felt it to my soul. You see, my 8-year-old son is also an immigrant. My wife and I adopted him from Russia just before Vladimir Putin slammed the door shut for other children who could desperately use a loving home in America.

We had to come home after adoption was granted and wait out an appeal period. We had to leave our son behind and then go back and get him weeks later. So I understand the problem well and what is at stake.

America has struggled with this issue since our creation. We are a Nation of immigrants. My ancestors arrived in America during the Irish potato famine. We can't ignore immigration, both illegal and legal, any longer. The issue surrounds us every day, especially if you live in border communities, areas of large immigrant populations—legal and illegal—or resort communities or agriculture communities who depend upon guest workers to even function.

In 1986, Congress passed the Simpson-Mazzoli Act, which was signed into law by President Reagan, the last major immigration legislation. This granted legal status to about 4 million illegal immigrants with a commitment to fund what was necessary to secure our borders.

However, clearly, we did not secure our borders, and that failure is why we struggle right now with this problem. Our Nation's border agents stop about 2,000 people deemed to be high risk, attempting to enter the United States from Africa and the Middle East at our southern border every year.

Does anybody care to estimate the number of people we do not apprehend and the risks they pose to our security?

A group of young people, often called the DACA population, are estimated at 1.6 to 1.8 million people and they are here, young people brought here by their parents—yes, illegally, I grant that—but the question remains: What do we do? Leave them in limbo? Leave them in fear on the edge of society?

America has an immigration system that is old-fashioned at best. Rather than doing what is necessary, like other nations have, a merit-based immigration system, we have visa lottery, family chain migration, and a refugee and asylum system that does not work—all backed up by illegal immigration that we can't address solely through deportations and hearings.

We must secure our borders now. Not some day. Not maybe.

We must end the political circus of the DACA program and fix the limbo status for the DACA population now. We must move to merit-based immigration, end the visa lottery, and end family chain migration.

There is no answer to these issues that is perfect, in the view of myself and many, because we are in a representative democracy. I don't believe perfect exists in the world.

I spent 35 years in a private business. I don't think I ever saw perfect. My spouse and children will tell you I am far from their definition of perfect. I came here to address our Nation's challenges and take those tough votes gladly because I want to make a difference.

I chatted with a more senior member at the airport Friday who commented that only 100 or 150 Members of this body are prepared to truly work on solving this problem, to compromise, and take a tough vote on immigration.

Some believe their idea is the only approach. Some have election fears. Some want to message on this issue at elections.

Less than 12,000 individuals have ever served in the House of Representatives. To all with the honor and responsibility of being in this Chamber, I say, now is the time to step up, work on this issue, compromise, tackle the dilemma, and then take a vote to move it forward to a better place.

Because, again: ''Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.''

COMPASSIONATE, COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, this week we plan on voting on a very strong bill known as the Border Security and Immigration Reform Act.

To better assess our immigration system and the security of our border, I went to the United States-Mexico border near El Paso, Texas, this weekend. I rise today to share some of the stories I heard from our Customs and Border Patrol officers and the compassion they had for these families and children they interact with.

These agents and officers had the highest on-the-job injury rate among all law enforcement groups across the country. Additionally, these officers see some of the worst conditions and are exposed to wide-ranging health risks like scabies, lice, tuberculosis, chicken pox, and many others.

Day to day, these officers are on the front lines protecting our Nation's borders. They are often stopping drug trafficking, human trafficking, and much more. They see the worst of the worst, and put their lives on the line to secure our Nation every day. In exchange for this, they are often portrayed on the national media as cruel and are compared to unthinkable, unimaginable groups from our world's history.

This is not the experience I had with them this weekend. These officers have huge hearts, and they are often given a tough task at the border. They told me story after story of how they bring personal items like teddy bears and toys from their homes to provide to children, and oftentimes run to McDonald's and other restaurants to get food for hungry kids who had a very long, dangerous journey.

No one is denying that the situation on our Nation's border is terrible, and our agents at the border see this tragedy daily. Seeing this for myself firsthand, I quickly realized, there is no perfect fix. But it is imperative that we recognize and honor our Border Patrol agents' hard work, and do our part in Congress to pass compassionate, comprehensive immigration reform that still secures our borders and helps alleviate the situation of crisis which now exists.

AMERICA IS A NATION OF LAWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MITCHELL). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, some of the political rhetoric and political opportunism is at an all-time high of ridiculous on this issue of immigration. Let's take a step back and let's think through this, and let us reason together as Americans.

No American who I have talked to in my district in west Texas or beyond, has any problem with folks immigrating to this great Nation. We are a Nation of immigrants. But we are a Nation of laws.

And just like if I took folks out of the unemployment line and took them to your office and sat them in your office and said, you have got to hire them, or you are heartless. You don't care about them.

You would look at me like I had three heads, and you would say, they have got to go through an application process. We have got to vet them. We need to know that they have the merit to fill the job, that they are competent, that they have the moral character, that they are qualified.

□ 1215

There is not a single Democrat, if I brought them people from that unemployment line, who would just hire them on account of my threats of their being heartless and any other fear tactic. Why would we be any different with the standards of citizenship in this great Nation? Why?

Most of these kids coming over here are unaccompanied, about 83 percent, and then some with their parents. There has been this recent uproar about kids coming and being separated from their parents. I don't like that. I wish it weren't the case. I am prepared to fix it. That is what we should do in Congress, fix the laws when we find something that is not working.

This President is just enforcing the laws. We haven't had a President enforce the laws. We haven't had the respect for the Constitution and the rule of law in so long that we are outraged that a President would actually just

hold people accountable for breaking the law and violating our sovereignty.

Then there is that little hang-up with the 1997 Flores case, which is the law of the land that says you can't hold a minor for more than 20 days. That is the law. If you want it changed, then write your Congressman, call your Congressman, and get him to fix it. Instead of holding press conferences on the border, why don't you get back to work, roll up your sleeves, and work across the aisle to solve the problem.

Remember, most of these kids are coming from a place where they presumably fear for their lives. Their lives are at risk every day, and now they are in a country where they get three hot meals, and they get shelter. They don't have to worry about whether somebody is going to kill them. I would say that is a great start, for a benevolent country to do that.

Meanwhile, we have to process folks who don't come to a port of entry—as is the law of the land—to present yourself as an asylum seeker. We have the law for that. We have an answer: Present yourself at a port of entry.

But if you cross the border any other place, then you are going to be caught now, under this President, arrested, and processed for your hearing. And if found unlawfully to be here, you will be deported. That is the way it works. That is the way it ought to work.

Now, international law says that if you are fleeing for your life, you should stop in the first safe country you come to. That would be Mexico. That is where they should all be, if they are truly asylum seekers. If you are truly afraid for your life, you ought to be grateful that you are safe, that you don't have to worry, that you trust that the process will work, and that you will be vetted and found legitimate.

I don't want to separate the parents from their kids. This President doesn't want to either.

Mr. Speaker, Congress needs to get off our duff, do our job, and fix the problem. Everybody who is running around, taking this opportunity to fly whatever flag he or she wants to fly on this, let's solve the problem.

In Texas, illegal immigration costs us $6,000 per illegal immigrant, $12 billion, over 10 percent of our budget, and $100 billion nationwide. It is a huge cost: education, healthcare, the list goes on. We are already insolvent, $21 trillion in debt. We can't afford to make good on the promises for our kids and grandkids.

What is wrong with this picture?

Mr. Speaker, we have to work together to solve this problem, secure the border, stop illegal immigration, move to a merit-based immigration system, and move this country forward as leaders.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RUTHERFORD) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Without a future, as a people we are depressed and limited in creative imaging. Without a past, we are inexperienced and lost between success and failure.

Be as present to this Nation today as You were to our Founders. As the Creator and providential Lord, guide the Members of this people's House, and all their efforts, to uphold the Constitution and have it interface with present realities until true priorities arise as the Nation's agenda.

Stir within all Americans a solidarity that will always unite and never divide us. Renew in us a spirit that will enable this country to be a righteous leader into a bold future, shaping a new culture of collaboration and understanding for the 21st century.

May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 22, 2018.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on June 22, 2018, at 1:50 p.m.:

That the Senate agree to the amendments of the House of Representatives S.1091.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1516

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana) at 3 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

COOPERATE WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND WATCH ACT OF 2018

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5783) to provide a safe harbor for financial institutions that maintain a customer account at the request of a Federal or State law enforcement agency, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5783

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Cooperate with Law Enforcement Agencies and Watch Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. SAFE HARBOR WITH RESPECT TO KEEP OPEN LETTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 53 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 5333. Safe harbor with respect to keep open letters

''(a) IN GENERAL.—With respect to a customer account of a financial institution, if a Federal, State, Tribal, or local law enforcement agency requests, in writing, the financial institution to keep such account open—

''(1) the financial institution shall not be liable under this subchapter for maintaining such account consistent with the parameters of the request; and

''(2) no Federal or State department or agency may take any adverse supervisory action under this subchapter with respect to

the financial institution for maintaining such account consistent with the parameters of the request.

''(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

''(1) from preventing a Federal or State department or agency from verifying the validity of a written request described under subsection (a) with the Federal, State, Tribal, or local law enforcement agency making the written request; or

''(2) to relieve a financial institution from complying with any reporting requirements, including the reporting of suspicious transactions under section 5318(g).

''(c) LETTER TERMINATION DATE.—For purposes of this section, any written request described under subsection (a) shall include a termination date after which such request shall no longer apply.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for chapter 53 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 5332 the following:

''5333. Safe harbor with respect to keep open letters.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a former community banker, I have dealt with the conflict of wanting to help law enforcement agencies when receiving what is called a keep open letter, while not being able to because of the need also to comply with the requirements of my regulatory responsibilities, the rules on setting out how banks have to open and close a suspected account by a regulator.

Today, the overall purpose of this bill is to support law enforcement and reduce money laundering and terrorist financing through our banking system. That is why, along with my good friend from Illinois, Dr. FOSTER, I was pleased to introduce this commonsense bill. It enables partnerships without repercussions between law enforcement agencies and local community financial institutions by allowing law enforcement to monitor the cash flows associated with criminal investigations at a financial institution.

Under the Bank Secrecy Act and the anti-money laundering regulations, banks face strict rules for managing accounts so that they cannot facilitate money laundering, terrorism financing, drug running, or other illegal activities.

Sometimes banks receive notices from law enforcement agencies known as keep open letters. That requests a bank to keep open an account so that the law enforcement agency can track payments and better monitor criminals.

Such requests might come from the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, known as FinCEN, local police, or any other law enforcement agency.

If banks help law enforcement comply with keep open letter requests, they in turn, unfortunately, risk being penalized by regulators for allowing an account to be open and continue to be open by someone who is suspected of a crime.

This commonsense bill supports those efforts by law enforcement by allowing the financial institutions to comply with the keep open requests and maintain a suspicious account without being penalized by regulators.

Financial institutions will no longer be liable for maintaining an account for law enforcement investigative purposes.

Under this bill, no Federal department or agency may take an adverse supervisory action with respect to that financial institution for keeping open such an account.

This is a commonsense bill and I urge all my colleagues to support it. It will give law enforcement the tools they need to prosecute bad actors and, I think, be better and more fair in its treatment for our financial institutions.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would strengthen cooperation between financial institutions and law enforcement to better combat terrorism and financial crime by providing a narrow safe harbor from BSA/AML—that is Bank Secrecy Act and Anti-Money Laundering, that is the acronym—scrutiny of financial institutions that keep a customer account open at the written request of Federal and State law enforcement.

This cooperation will enable law enforcement agencies to follow the money in the bank accounts of terrorists, human traffickers, corrupt officials, and those involved in organized crime.

We support this. This is a commonsense, bipartisan bill, and I urge support.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to just urge my colleagues to recognize this as a strong group of bipartisan work by Dr. FOSTER and it received solid support in the committee, that it balances the law enforcement obligations to investigate criminals, but also treats, in the regulatory system, our community financial institutions in a more fair manner. I hope all my colleagues will support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5783, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

THE CREDIT ACCESS AND INCLUSION ACT OF 2017

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 435) to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to clarify Federal law with respect to reporting certain positive consumer credit information to consumer reporting agencies, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 435

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''The Credit Access and Inclusion Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. POSITIVE CREDIT REPORTING PERMITTED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 623 of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681s–2) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(f) FULL-FILE CREDIT REPORTING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the limitation in paragraph (2) and notwithstanding any other provision of law, a person or the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may furnish to a consumer reporting agency information relating to the performance of a consumer in making payments—

''(A) under a lease agreement with respect to a dwelling, including such a lease in which the Department of Housing and Urban Development provides subsidized payments for occupancy in a dwelling; or

''(B) pursuant to a contract for a utility or telecommunications service.

''(2) LIMITATION.—Information about a consumer's usage of any utility services provided by a utility or telecommunication firm may be furnished to a consumer reporting agency only to the extent that such information relates to payment by the consumer for the services of such utility or telecommunication service or other terms of the provision of the services to the consumer, including any deposit, discount, or conditions for interruption or termination of the services.

''(3) PAYMENT PLAN.—An energy utility firm may not report payment information to a consumer reporting agency with respect to an outstanding balance of a consumer as late if—

''(A) the energy utility firm and the consumer have entered into a payment plan (including a deferred payment agreement, an arrearage management program, or a debt forgiveness program) with respect to such outstanding balance; and

''(B) the consumer is meeting the obligations of the payment plan, as determined by the energy utility firm.

''(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the following definitions shall apply:

''(A) ENERGY UTILITY FIRM.—The term 'energy utility firm' means an entity that provides gas or electric utility services to the public.

''(B) UTILITY OR TELECOMMUNICATION FIRM.—The term 'utility or telecommunication firm' means an entity that provides utility services to the public through pipe, wire, landline, wireless, cable, or other connected facilities, or radio, electronic, or similar transmission (including the extension of such facilities).''.

(b) LIMITATION ON LIABILITY.—Section 623(c) of the Consumer Credit Protection Act (15 U.S.C. 1681s–2(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph:

''(3) subsection (f) of this section, including any regulations issued thereunder; or''.

(c) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the impact of furnishing information pursuant to subsection (f) of section 623 of the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681s–2) (as added by this Act) on consumers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 435, introduced by my good friend from Minnesota, KEITH ELLISON, The Credit Access and Inclusion Act of 2017, would amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to authorize the Department of Housing to furnish consumer credit reports to include an individual's payment history from rental payments for a dwelling, including HUD-subsidized properties, and payment history for utility and telecommunications contracts.

I want to thank my friend for this great piece of work on his part on making credit more accessible, making it easier to get the data that consumers need to build a credit record. It is not all just credit card payments, Mr. Speaker, or payments to banks.

This kind of work that my friend from Minnesota has tackled improves consumers' ability to build that very, very important thing in our society, which is access to credit.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Arkansas and the bipartisan group that came together to make this passage of The Credit Access and Inclusion Act possible.

Mr. Speaker, let me just ask you, and anyone, a question. If you could help millions of people get access to an apartment, get a lower-cost loan, a lower phone or utility deposit all without creating a new government program, without spending any government money, without a government mandate, and virtually no new tax dollars, would you take that deal?

I think that is a good deal. This is what we are proposing here. I know I would take that deal.

Mr. Speaker, I am urging all Members to vote in favor of the passage of The Credit Access and Inclusion Act, because that is what it would do simply by saying we are going to use all the data that consumers rely on now that is not necessarily credit related but does show that they pay their bills to be included in the construction of that credit score.

That is why I am proud to be here today, because the passage of this bipartisan Credit Access and Inclusion Act is going to help Americans be more successful in this economy. It will reward people who pay their utility and their phone bills on time, because it is important to note that when those bills are not paid on time, they are already reported.

People get credit, under this bill, for the bills that they pay on time, and still are able and in a position to be able to get perhaps lower interest rates, get lower deposits they have to put down, and be able to lead more prosperous economic lives.

This bill is about bringing some basic fairness to the credit scoring system. I mean, credit is currently a currency in our society. It unlocks access to goods and services hardworking Americans need to build some economic security for themselves and their families.

But there are currently, Mr. Speaker, 26 million, or at least one in ten Americans, who do not have a credit record. They are what they call invisibles. Another 19 million Americans do not have enough information to score. Low-income individuals and racial and ethnic minorities are often in the worst shape.

If we want to do something about closing the wealth gap between different peoples of different backgrounds and really bringing economic opportunity to all, this is the right bill to take a step.

About one in four Latinos and African Americans either don't have a credit record or don't have enough of a record to score, and almost half of the residents of low-income communities do not have a score.

That doesn't mean they don't have needs, Mr. Speaker. That doesn't mean they don't get phones and they don't pay bills and they don't get apartments. It just means they tend to pay more for them.

In fact, we have heard the old adage that the poor pay more. It is expensive to be poor. Those things are true. This bill can make that a little less true and bring a little bit more happiness and economic prosperity to people.

This bill allows credit rating agencies to use on-time rent, phone, and utility payments when determining credit scores. As a result, more than a third of previously unscoreable Americans will now have access to prime credit and the opportunities that come with it.

This bill isn't just about access to credit, though. It is about a little bit more than that. It is also about saving hardworking Americans real money, thousands of dollars, Mr. Speaker, on their car loans and on their mortgages, because if you are unscoreable or if your score is unnecessarily high because that non-loan data is not counted, you may get the loan, but you will pay more for it.

That is money that could be used to help build a family's wealth, create some savings, Mr. Speaker, so that when you get into an emergency, you can use your own money as opposed to going to a payday lender.

This is a good bill. That is why it has bipartisan support and that is why I am glad that Congressman FRENCH HILL and I were able to work together on it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for a favorable vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank my friend from Minnesota. We have worked together on this bill during the year. I am pleased to see it back on the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I urge bipartisan support for helping all American consumers have a new and better way to help build their credit and get access to credit to preserve the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, we have no other speakers on this side, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 435, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1530

PREVENTION OF PRIVATE INFORMATION DISSEMINATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4294) to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to provide a criminal penalty for unauthorized disclosures of certain individually identifiable information by officers or employees of a

Federal department or agency, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4294

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Prevention of Private Information Dissemination Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. CRIMINAL PENALTY FOR UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURES.

Section 165 of the Financial Stability Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5365) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) CRIMINAL PENALTY FOR UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURES.—Section 552a(i)(1) of title 5, United States Code, shall apply to a determination made under subsection (d) or (i) based on individually identifiable information submitted pursuant to the requirements of this section to the same extent as such section 552a(i)(1) applies to agency records which contain individually identifiable information the disclosure of which is prohibited by such section 552a or by rules or regulations established thereunder.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD an exchange of letters between the committees of jurisdiction.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, June 22, 2018.

Hon. JEB HENSARLING,
Chairman, Committee on Financial Services, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HENSARLING: I write with respect to H.R. 4294, the ''Prevention of Private Information Dissemination Act.'' As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions within H.R. 4294 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I forego any further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 4294 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation and that our committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 4294 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,
Washington, DC, June 25, 2018.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for your June 22, 2018 letter regarding H.R. 4294, the ''Prevention of Private Information Dissemination Act of 2017''.

I am most appreciative of your decision to forego action on H.R. 4294 so that it may move expeditiously to the House floor. I acknowledge that although you are waiving action on the bill, the Committee on the Judiciary is in no way waiving its jurisdictional interest in this or similar legislation. In addition, if a conference is necessary on this legislation, I will support any request that your committee be represented therein.

Finally, I shall be pleased to include your letter in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 4294.

Sincerely,

JEB HENSARLING,
Chairman.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. KUSTOFF), the author of this bill.

Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 4294, the Prevention of Private Information Dissemination Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation will establish criminal penalties for the unauthorized disclosure of living will and stress test determinations and other individually identifiable information by Federal officials.

With recent data breaches and leaks of sensitive information, it is essential that we ensure that this information is safely guarded and that people are punished for their illicit actions.

Since the enactment of Dodd-Frank in 2010, bank holding and certain nonbank companies, designated as systemically important financial institutions, otherwise known as SIFIs, are required to submit annual reports to the Federal Reserve and the Federal Deposit Insurance Company, the FDIC.

The purpose of these reports is to outline the company's strategy for a potential bankruptcy in times of market stress. Through the living will and the stress test process, banks submit detailed financial reports about their businesses, such as assets, trade secrets, and other classified information to the Federal Reserve and to the FDIC.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the information has the potential to be leaked by employees and, unfortunately, in April of 2016, this did occur. In fact, on April 12, 2016, it was discovered that nonpublic confidential supervisory information related to the living will results was leaked to the press directly.

The Wall Street Journal article from that day cited ''people familiar with the matter'' indicated that the agencies planned to reject the revised living wills of at least half of the U.S. banks that resubmitted proposals before formal decisions were sent to the institutions.

In this instance, the leak was extremely harmful, as financial institutions were preparing their quarterly investor reports. As a result, regulators were forced to formally release their findings the next day. In addition, this private information has market-moving implications and can result in insider trading and illegal sharing of information.

Mr. Speaker, prior to Dodd-Frank, the FDIC did not have market-moving information on high-profile industries. Stress test requirements therefore meant that the FDIC had to create new policies and new procedures to help protect the information. According to the FDIC's Principal Deputy Inspector General in 2016, the agency is ''not there yet,'' and it may not be prepared to safeguard the information.

Sadly, between 2015 and 2016, the FDIC experienced many data breaches that involved employees leaving the company. One such incident occurred in 2015, in which a departing employee downloaded sensitive stress test data onto a thumb drive.

These leaks are deeply troubling and, overall, they are unacceptable. This information could be obtained by individuals to either invest or to divest in particular stocks, which, obviously, can be quite damaging to bank investors and to the capital markets.

The unauthorized disclosure of information that can significantly alter the stock market is an extremely punishable offense. By increasing penalties on employees of these agencies, it proves, frankly, that they are not above the law.

That is why I introduced this bill, to ensure that sensitive market information is properly protected and that people who improperly disclose nonpublic, confidential information are, in fact, punished. Mr. Speaker, ultimately, this is commonsense legislation that will help mitigate future leaks of sensitive information.

I do want to thank Chairman HENSARLING and the entire Financial Services Committee for their continued hard work.

I urge my colleagues to support this extremely important piece of legislation.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the bill makes clear that the penalties apply to officers and employees of Federal departments or agencies who willfully disclose agency records that contain personal identifiable information pursuant to section 165 of the Dodd-Frank Act. These acts are already illegal, and this bill is a clarification to make sure that these penalties apply.

This is a commonsense bipartisan bill, and I urge support.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4294, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FIGHT ILLICIT NETWORKS AND DETECT TRAFFICKING ACT

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6069) to require the Comptroller General of the United States to carry out a study on how virtual currencies and online marketplaces are used to buy, sell, or facilitate the financing of goods or services associated with sex trafficking or drug trafficking, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6069

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Fight Illicit Networks and Detect Trafficking Act'' or the ''FIND Trafficking Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) According to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) 2017 National Drug Threat Assessment, transnational criminal organizations are increasingly using virtual currencies.

(2) The Treasury Department has recognized that: ''The development of virtual currencies is an attempt to meet a legitimate market demand. According to a Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago economist, U.S. consumers want payment options that are versatile and that provide immediate finality. No U.S. payment method meets that description, although cash may come closest. Virtual currencies can mimic cash's immediate finality and anonymity and are more versatile than cash for online and cross-border transactions, making virtual currencies vulnerable for illicit transactions.''.

(3) Virtual currencies have become a prominent method to pay for goods and services associated with illegal sex trafficking and drug trafficking, which are two of the most detrimental and troubling illegal activities facilitated by online marketplaces.

(4) Online marketplaces, including the darkweb, have become a prominent platform to buy, sell, and advertise for illicit goods and services associated with sex trafficking and drug trafficking.

(5) According to the International Labour Organization, in 2016, 4.8 million people in the world were victims of forced sexual exploitation, and in 2014, the global profit from commercial sexual exploitation was $99 billion.

(6) In 2016, within the United States, the Center for Disease Control estimated that there were 64,000 deaths related to drug overdose, and the most severe increase in drug overdoses were those associated with fentanyl and fentanyl analogs (synthetic opioids), which amounted to over 20,000 overdose deaths.

(7) According to the U.S. Department of the Treasury 2015 National Money Laundering Risk Assessment, an estimated $64 billion is generated annually from U.S. drug trafficking sales.

(8) Illegal fentanyl in the United States originates primarily from China, and it is readily available to purchase through online marketplaces.

SEC. 3. GAO STUDY.

(a) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on how virtual currencies and online marketplaces are used to facilitate sex and drug trafficking. The study shall consider—

(1) how online marketplaces, including the darkweb, are being used as platforms to buy, sell, or facilitate the financing of goods or services associated with sex trafficking or drug trafficking (specifically, opioids and synthetic opioids, including fentanyl, fentanyl analogs, and any precursor chemicals associated with manufacturing fentanyl or fentanyl analogs) destined for, originating from, or within the United States;

(2) how financial payment methods, including virtual currencies and peer-to-peer mobile payment services, are being utilized by online marketplaces to facilitate the buying, selling, or financing of goods and services associated with sex or drug trafficking destined for, originating from, or within the United States;

(3) how virtual currencies are being used to facilitate the buying, selling, or financing of goods and services associated with sex or drug trafficking, destined for, originating from, or within the United States, when an online platform is not otherwise involved;

(4) how illicit funds that have been transmitted online and through virtual currencies are repatriated into the formal banking system of the United States through money laundering or other means;

(5) the participants (state and non-state actors) throughout the entire supply chain that participate in or benefit from the buying, selling, or financing of goods and services associated with sex or drug trafficking (either through online marketplaces or virtual currencies) destined for, originating from, or within the United States;

(6) Federal and State agency efforts to impede the buying, selling, or financing of goods and services associated with sex or drug trafficking destined for, originating from, or within the United States, including efforts to prevent the proceeds from sex or drug trafficking from entering the United States banking system;

(7) how virtual currencies and their underlying technologies can be used to detect and deter these illicit activities; and

(8) to what extent can the immutable and traceable nature of virtual currencies contribute to the tracking and prosecution of illicit funding.

(b) SCOPE.—For the purposes of the study required under subsection (a), the term ''sex trafficking'' means the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act that is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report summarizing the results of the study required under subsection (a), together with any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that would improve the efforts of Federal agencies to impede the use of virtual currencies and online marketplaces in facilitating sex and drug trafficking.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend from California, JUAN VARGAS, and my colleague from Pennsylvania, KEITH ROTHFUS, for their work together to cosponsor H.R. 6069, the Fight Illicit Networks and Detect Trafficking Act.

This is extremely important, and it is in keeping with the work that we have been doing in our subcommittee on terror finance, illicit financing, and also the work we have done on this House floor about stopping human trafficking that we see in this country and, also, the intensive work in the last 2 weeks on opioid legislation in trying to stop these kinds of drugs coming into our country.

This legislation would require the Government Accounting Office, the GAO, to study and report to Congress on how online marketplaces, including those on the dark web, are used as platforms to facilitate the financing of goods associated with drug trafficking or sex trafficking.

They would study payment methods, including virtual currencies and peer-to-peer payment services, that are also being used in drug and sex trafficking online; illicit funds that have been transmitted online and how virtual currencies are reintegrated into the U.S. financial system; and finally, Mr. Speaker, the study would have the participants of sex trafficking or drug trafficking trade online that benefit from the trade.

Although virtual currencies can be used for legal purchases, they have become a common financial payment method for criminals.

Online marketplaces, including the dark web, have become a prominent platform to buy, sell, and advertise for illicit goods and services associated with sex trafficking and drug trafficking.

According to the International Labor Organization, in 2016, 4.8 million people in the world were victims of forced sexual exploitation, and in 2014, the global profit from commercial sexual exploitation was $99 billion.

According to the U.S. Treasury's 2015 National Money Laundering Risk Assessment, an estimated $64 billion is

generated from U.S. drug trafficking operations.

Illegal fentanyl in the United States originates primarily from China and is readily available to purchase through online marketplaces. Certainly, all of my colleagues have heard extensively, over the last 2 weeks, the stunning horrors of how fentanyl has entered our marketplace, with one estimate that, just last year alone, enough came across our borders in this country to kill half the U.S. population.

According to the DEA, in 2017, the National Drug Threat Assessment, transnational criminal organizations are increasingly using virtual currencies. This bill will allow Congress to fully understand the extent to which virtual currencies are being used to facilitate drug and sex trafficking.

The bill will also study how virtual currencies can be used to detect and deter illicit activities and propose legislative solutions to fight these crimes.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. VARGAS), a respected, active member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6069, the Fight Illicit Networks and Detect Trafficking Act, FIND.

Allow me first to thank Chairman HENSARLING for his leadership and also Ranking Member WATERS for her leadership, and also for their support of this legislation.

I would also like to thank my good friend, Mr. FRENCH HILL. I thank him for his kind words and for his support of this bill.

I especially would like to thank Mr. ROTHFUS for his leadership on the Terrorism and Illicit Finance Subcommittee and for generously agreeing to colead this commonsense, narrowly tailored legislation.

As you may know, a virtual currency is a digital representation of value that can be digitally traded. Since the creation of bitcoin, the first and most widely known example of cryptocurrency, thousands of cryptocurrencies have emerged and are designed to serve a variety of purses.

Some forms of virtual currency provide a digital alternative to cash that lacks the oversight of a government or central bank and, potentially, offers greater anonymity than conventional payment systems.

Just as virtual currencies have grown in use in legitimate commerce, they have also become an increasingly popular financial payment method for criminals. Virtual currencies have been and continue to be exploited to pay for goods and services associated with illicit illegal sex and drug trafficking. These are two of the most detrimental and troubling illegal activities sold online.

According to the DEA 2017 National Drug Threat Assessment, transnational criminal organizations are increasingly using virtual currencies due to their ease of use and the anonymity they provide.

□ 1545

While evidence points to the growth of virtual currencies as a payment method for illicit sex and drug trafficking, the true scope of the problem and the potential solutions have not been fully established.

According to the International Labour Organization, in 2016, 4.8 million people in the world were victims of forced sexual exploitation, and in 2014, the global profit from commercial sexual exploitation was $99 billion.

Unfortunately, virtual currencies are also being used as a payment method for transnational drug traffickers.

As you may know all too well, the United States is struggling to combat the rising number of lives cut short by the tragic use of opioids. As was stated earlier by my good friend Mr. HILL, in 2016 alone, the CDC estimated that there were 64,000 deaths—64,000 deaths—in the U.S. related to drug overdose.

The most severe increases in drug overdoses were those associated with fentanyl and also fentanyl analogs. Fentanyl is an extremely deadly opioid that is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine. Fentanyl is being illicitly manufactured in China and Mexico, with most of the illegal fentanyl in the United States originating from China, and it is readily available to purchase through the online marketplaces.

If we are to craft effective regulatory and legislative solutions to combat these transnational criminal organizations, we need to fully study and analyze how virtual currencies and online marketplaces are used to facilitate sex and drug trafficking to determine how to best eliminate their use.

H.R. 6069, the FIND Trafficking Act of 2018, requires the Comptroller General of the United States to: one, carry out a study on how virtual currencies and online marketplaces are used to facilitate sex or drug trafficking; and, two, make recommendations to Congress on legislative and regulatory actions that would impede the use of virtual currencies and online marketplaces in facilitating sex and drug trafficking.

It is my sincere hope that this bill is the first step toward crafting bipartisan legislation to impede and eventually eliminate the use of virtual currencies by transnational criminal organizations that facilitate drug and sex trafficking.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I again thank both my colleagues here for their kind words about this bill and the bipartisanship that we have had on this bill.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, for the bipartisan work on this bill, I want to again thank Mr. ROTHFUS and my good friend Mr. VARGAS. You can see that he has the heart of a Jesuit and the mind of a Harvard lawyer.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6069, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HYDROGRAPHIC SERVICES IMPROVEMENT AMENDMENTS ACT

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 221) to reauthorize the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 221

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Hydrographic Services Improvement Amendments Act''.

SEC. 2. REAUTHORIZATION OF HYDROGRAPHIC SERVICES IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1998.

(a) REAUTHORIZATIONS.—Section 306 of the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 892d) is amended—

(1) by inserting before ''There are authorized'' the following: ''(a) IN GENERAL.—'';

(2) in subsection (a) (as designated by paragraph (1))—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''surveys—'' and all that follows through the end of the paragraph and inserting ''surveys, $70,814,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.'';

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking ''vessels—'' and all that follows through the end of the paragraph and inserting ''vessels, $25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.'';

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking ''Administration—'' and all that follows through the end of the paragraph and inserting ''Administration, $29,932,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.'';

(D) in paragraph (4), by striking ''title—'' and all that follows through the end of the paragraph and inserting ''title, $26,800,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.''; and

(E) in paragraph (5), by striking ''title—'' and all that follows through the end of the paragraph and inserting ''title, $30,564,000 for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023.''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(b) ARCTIC PROGRAMS.—Of the amount authorized by this section for each fiscal year—

''(1) $10,000,000 is authorized for use to acquire hydrographic data, provide hydrographic services, conduct coastal change analyses necessary to ensure safe navigation, and improve the management of coastal change in the Arctic; and

''(2) $2,000,000 is authorized for use to acquire hydrographic data and provide hydrographic services in the Arctic necessary to delineate the United States extended Continental Shelf.''.

(b) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES FOR SURVEYS.—Section 306 of such Act (33

U.S.C. 892d) is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES FOR SURVEYS.—Of amounts authorized by this section for each fiscal year for hydrographic surveys, not more than 5 percent is authorized for administrative costs.''.

SEC. 3. GAO STUDY.

The Comptroller General of the United States shall, by not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act—

(1) conduct a study comparing the unit costs of hydrographic surveys conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the unit costs of procuring performance of such surveys; and

(2) report to the Congress on the findings of such study.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alaska.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material for the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alaska?

There was no objection.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 221, the Hydrographic Services Improvement Amendments Act.

I was an original cosponsor and chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee when Representative Jim Saxton of New Jersey introduced the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998. My legislation will reauthorize the act through 2022 and will allow NOAA to conduct and contract for hydrographic surveys around the U.S., with specific focus on the Arctic.

Alaska is what makes the United States an Arctic Nation. My State has more coastline than any other State in this country, and we don't know what is under the surface. We are seeing a significant increase in vessel traffic, exploration, and resource development in our Arctic waters.

While hydrographic surveys are a critical part of the maritime safety, economic, and environmental efforts nationwide, they are especially important in the Arctic.

Mr. Speaker, there are more than 550,000 square nautical miles in the U.S. Arctic exclusive economic zone, otherwise a 200-mile limit. It would take decades to survey even half of that space.

NOAA has designated 38,000 miles as survey priority areas, and estimates a range up to 25 years to survey just those priority areas, if resources remain at their current level.

Alaskan waters are incredibly undersurveyed. Before this year, the last time the entrances and mouth to the Yukon River were surveyed was 1899. The river is the most effective route to deliver food and goods to coastal and inland villages in western Alaska, and the last on-the-ground surveys were completed the same year that gold was discovered in Nome.

Mr. Speaker, there are other areas around the Nation that have the same problem. This is a very important piece of legislation. If we are to continue to utilize the ocean onshore and offshore, I urge the passage of this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill reauthorizes the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act, which funds vital navigation and safety services of NOAA's Office of Coast Survey, which maintains more than 1,000 charts and publications used by Federal and State agencies, private organizations, and the public.

It is no small feat to do this for our Nation's 95,000 miles of shoreline and 3.4 million square nautical miles of water.

It is critical that we ensure Federal capacity for hydrographic surveys, mapping, and charting. NOAA vessels and data support a wide range of activities and inform decisions with significant economic, environmental, and safety impacts.

As we face rapidly changing ocean conditions, hydrographic services will only become more important. This is particularly true in the Arctic, where we will eventually see almost entirely ice-free summers. It is not a matter of if, but when and how soon. With that comes an entirely new seascape for maritime commerce and transport, defense, and natural resources.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague Mr. YOUNG for his hard work. I encourage adoption of this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 221, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GOLDEN SPIKE 150TH ANNIVERSARY ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5751) to redesignate Golden Spike National Historic Site and to establish the Transcontinental Railroad Network, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5751

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Golden Spike 150th Anniversary Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADJACENT LANDOWNER.—The term ''adjacent landowner'' means the non-Federal owner of property that directly abuts the Park boundaries.

(2) HISTORICAL CROSSING.—The term ''historical crossing'' means a corridor with a maximum width of 30 feet across former railroad rights-of-way within the Park—

(A) that has been used by adjacent landowners in an open manner multiple times in more than 1 of the past 10 years for vehicle, farm machinery, or livestock travel; or

(B) where existing utility or pipelines have been placed.

(3) NETWORK.—The term ''Network'' means the Transcontinental Railroad Network established under section 4.

(4) PARK.—The term ''Park'' means the Golden Spike National Historical Park designated under section 3.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the National Park Service.

(6) TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD.—The term ''Transcontinental Railroad'' means the approximately 1,912-mile continuous railroad constructed between 1863 and 1869 from Council Bluffs, Iowa, to San Francisco, California.

SEC. 3. REDESIGNATION.

(a) REDESIGNATION.—The Golden Spike National Historic Site designated April 2, 1957, and placed under the administration of the National Park Service under the Act of July 10, 1965 (79 Stat. 426), shall be known and designated as the ''Golden Spike National Historical Park''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Golden Spike National Historic Site shall be considered a reference to the ''Golden Spike National Historical Park''.

(c) NETWORK.—The Park shall be part of the Network.

SEC. 4. TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD NETWORK.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish, within the National Park Service, the Transcontinental Railroad Network. The Network shall not include properties used in active freight railroad operations (or other ancillary purposes) or reasonably anticipated to be used for freight railroad operations in the future.

(b) STUDY.—The Secretary shall—

(1) inventory National Park Service sites, facilities, and programs; and

(2) identify other sites, facilities, and programs,

to determine their suitability for inclusion in the Network, as delineated under subsection (e).

(c) DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.—In carrying out the Network, the Secretary shall—

(1) produce and disseminate appropriate education materials relating to the history, construction, and legacy of the Transcontinental Railroad, such as handbooks, maps, interpretive guides, or electronic information;

(2) identify opportunities to enhance the recognition of immigrant laborers' contributions to the history, construction, and legacy of the Transcontinental Railroad;

(3) enter into appropriate cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding to provide technical assistance under subsection (d); and

(4) create and adopt an official, uniform symbol or device for the Network and issue guidance for the use of such symbol or device.

(d) ELEMENTS.—The Network shall encompass the following elements:

(1) All units and programs of the National Park Service that are determined by the Secretary to relate to the history, construction, and legacy of the Transcontinental Railroad.

(2) With the consent of each person owning any legal interest in the property, other Federal, State, local, and privately owned properties that have a verifiable connection to the history, construction, and legacy of the Transcontinental Railroad and are included in, or determined by the Secretary to be eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places.

(3) Other governmental and nongovernmental programs of an educational, research, or interpretive nature that are directly related to the history, construction, and legacy of the Transcontinental Railroad.

(e) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—To achieve the purposes of this section and to ensure effective coordination of the Federal and non-Federal elements of the Network described in subsection (d) with National Park System units and programs of the National Park Service, the Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding with, and provide technical assistance to, the heads of other Federal agencies, States, units of local government, regional governmental bodies, and private entities.

SEC. 5. AGREEMENTS AFFECTING CERTAIN HISTORICAL CROSSINGS.

(a) PROGRAMMATIC AGREEMENT.—No later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall enter into a Programmatic Agreement with the Utah State Historic Preservation Office and other consulting parties to add certain undertakings in the Park to the list of those eligible for streamlined review under section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (54 U.S.C. 306108). In the development of the Programmatic Agreement, the Secretary shall collaborate with adjacent landowners, Tribes, and other consulting parties.

(b) PROCESS FOR APPROVAL.—After the completion of the Programmatic Agreement under subsection (a), an adjacent landowner shall give the Secretary notice of proposed certain undertakings. Within 30 days of the receipt of the notice, the Secretary shall review and approve the proposed certain undertakings if consistent with the Programmatic Agreement.

(c) DEFINITION OF CERTAIN UNDERTAKINGS.—As used in this section, the term ''certain undertakings'' means those activities that take place on, within, or under a historical crossing and—

(1) will last less than 1 month and will have limited physical impact on the surface of the historical crossing;

(2) have been implemented by an adjacent landowner or other adjacent landowners in the past; or

(3) is the subject of a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

SEC. 6. INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL.

At the request of an adjacent landowner, within 30 days of such a request, the Secretary shall authorize the adjacent landowner to participate in the eradication of invasive species in the Park for a period of up to 10 years, subject to renewal. Such an authorization shall provide—

(1) that the invasive species proposed for eradication is identified as such by the National Park Service;

(2) that the method, timing, and location of the eradication must be approved by the Secretary; and

(3) appropriate indemnification of the adjacent landowner.

SEC. 7. FUNDING CLARIFICATION.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

May 10, 1869, is one of the most significant dates that we have in American history because that is the date when a congressionally mandated provision to try to unite the two oceans on this continent Nation together actually came into being.

The final spike that was put into this effort that was originated by Congress and, actually, oddly enough, Congress had to get them to stop going at different directions and come together at one point, took place in Promontory Summit in my State of Utah, in my district, about 30 miles from where I live.

This is a prominent symbol of the most significant achievement we had in the 19th century. It is, for transportation, as significant as landing a man on the moon would be for the 20th century.

Having the rail system go in there meant that some of my ancestors who had to walk every step across the plains, taking months to get to Utah, could now do it in 7 days on the new train that was going through there.

This is one of those things that has the support of the National Park Service, which wants to make sure that some of the less visual parks are given the quality attention they deserve, to make them something that is important for the future history of this country.

So it is not just going to be a park. This is going to be a historic park, and it is going to be part of a transcontinental railroad network that will take all sorts of other activities that deal with transportation within the area, allow them to make them more public, and allow people to spend several days visiting different areas.

It is also important since, ironically, within a few miles of this location is also the site where most of the motors that were made for outer space travel were also built at the same time.

This can also become a hub of truly educational value about transportation in both the 19th century as well as the 20th century. It can also be an opportunity to tell the story of the literally thousands of immigrants who helped build the system going both ways in both directions. And it establishes a process so that challenges that have been longstanding with neighboring landowners can be resolved in an easy and simple way not only now but also going into the future.

□ 1600

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill which will make the Golden Spike a national historical park in time for the 150th birthday which will be May 10, 2019.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5751 redesignates the Golden Spike National Historic Site as the Golden Spike National Historical Park and directs the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program known as the Transcontinental Railroad Network within the National Park Service.

On May 10, 1869, a historically very significant day in the history of our country, the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts were linked for the first time in our Nation's history when the 1,912-mile system of hand-built tracks was completed in Promontory, Utah.

This national historical park designation is a fitting tribute that acknowledges the significance of this event. The bill will also help the National Park Service educate the public about the history, construction, and legacy of the transcontinental railroad without additional funds.

I would like to thank the chairman for his efforts to preserve an important part of our history. This is a good bill, and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I invite all of you out next May 10 to a celebration at this site. It will be a party you will not forget.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues' adoption, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BACON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5751, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TULARE YOUTH RECREATION AND WOMEN'S HISTORY ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 805) to authorize the conveyance of and remove the reversionary interest of the United States in certain lands in the City of Tulare, California.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 805

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Tulare Youth Recreation and Women's History Enhancement Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) The City of Tulare requires clear title to two Parcels of land within the City's business corridor.

(2) The Parcels are part of a right-of-way granted to the Railroad by the Federal Government by the Act dated July 27, 1866.

(3) The Parcels, which are currently under lease to the City, are currently occupied by an outdoor recreation facility for youth and a historic women's club.

(4) The City desires to improve and restore these facilities but cannot absent clear title to the Parcels.

(5) The United States retained a reversionary interest in the Parcels conveyed to the Railroad in 1866 and has not exercised this authority.

(6) The Union Pacific Railroad desires to sell the Parcels to the City.

(7) Public Law 105–195 conveyed the reversionary interest to all surrounding Parcels in 1998, which were conveyed by the Union Pacific Railroad to the City.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF CONVEYANCE AND REMOVAL OF REVERSIONARY INTEREST.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CITY.—The term ''City'' means the City of Tulare, California.

(2) MAP.—The term ''Map'' means the map entitled ''Tulare Railroad Parcels Proposed to be Acquired'', dated April 30, 2015.

(3) PARCELS.—The term ''Parcels'' means the land identified as ''Tulare Railroad Proposed Parcels'' on the Map.

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(5) RAILROAD.—The term ''Railroad'' means the Union Pacific Railroad.

(b) REVERSIONARY INTEREST EXTINGUISHED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To promote recreational opportunities for youth and commemorate women's history in the City, the United States authorizes the conveyance of and relinquishes its reversionary interest in the Parcels retained under the Act of July 27, 1866 (14 Stat. 292, chapter 278).

(2) REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION.—The relinquishment of the reversionary interest under paragraph (1) shall be executed by the Secretary in an instrument that—

(A) is suitable for recording in the records of Tulare County, California; and

(B) references this Act and any prior instruments relating to the United States interest in the Parcels.

(3) COSTS.—Any costs associated with the required documentation under paragraph (2) shall be paid by the City.

(4) CONDITION.—The relinquishment of the reversionary interest under paragraph (1) shall be effective on the date that the Railroad conveys the Parcels to the City.

(c) MAP ON FILE.—The Map shall be kept on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

(d) PRESERVATION OF EXISTING RIGHTS OF ACCESS.—Nothing in this Act shall impair any existing rights of access in favor of the public or any owner of adjacent lands over, under or across the Parcels.

(e) SURFACE ENTRY.—The Parcels shall be subject to the same conditions as those parcels affected by Public Law 105–195 regarding rights of surface entry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for allowing this bill to come up today.

I rise in support of H.R. 805, the Tulare Youth Recreation and Women's History Enhancement Act.

This bill simply removes a Federal revisionary interest in two parcels of land in my hometown of Tulare, California, and offers their conveyance to the city.

This would allow the city to purchase this land from the Union Pacific Railroad, which received the land from the Federal Government by right-of-way in the 19th century. One parcel has long been home to a historic Women's Club House which has served as an important community center for more than 100 years.

The Women's Club House is in need of critical repairs, but the city of Tulare has been reluctant to make repairs without clear title to the land. If this bill were enacted, the city would be making needed repairs to this historical landmark, preserving it for generations to come.

The second parcel of land is home to the Rotary Skate Park, which is a recreational park used by young and old residents alike. Both of these community locations are extremely important to the people of the San Joaquin Valley, and this bill will ensure their continued use for many years to come.

I want to thank, again, the chair and ranking member for their support, and urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 805, releases the reversionary interests on two parcels of land in Tulare County in California. These parcels are currently leased from the Union Pacific Railroad and contain a skate park and historic women's club, owned and operated by the city.

City officials want to make improvements to both facilities, but are unable to secure financing without clean and free titles to the property.

In the 19th century, Congress granted the land to Southern Pacific Railroad, the predecessor of Union Pacific, for use as a railroad right-of-way. Congress subsequently authorized the railroad to lease the land to Tulare for other public purposes. However, the land remains encumbered with a reversionary interest.

Congress passed a law in 1998 that released the reversionary interest on 12 parcels in Tulare. H.R. 805 deals with two additional parcels, allowing Union Pacific to sell the land to Tulare and clear the way for planned improvements.

The 1998 law was the first time Congress authorized the release of a reversionary interest for redevelopment purposes. At the time, the railroad had already sold the land at Tulare, even though it belonged to taxpayers, and Congress had to intervene to remedy the situation. Unlike the situation in 1998, the two parcels affected by this bill have not been sold and under normal circumstances, the Federal Government—not Union Pacific—should receive payment for the parcels if they are no longer used as originally intended by Congress.

However, the history of congressional involvement in Tulare justifies an exception to this standard. Due to the circumstances, I am happy to support this bill and I urge my colleagues to support its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is not a significant bill. We are talking about a couple of acres of property that used to be owned by the Federal Government that had no purpose and use for it. So they gave it up. But instead, Congress decided to include a reversionary clause with this stuff so that if they ever wanted to do something different with these 2 acres of property, they would have to come crawling back to us to ask for our permission to do it, which is silly.

It is ridiculous that we have to go through this process time, after time, after time. The Federal Government didn't need this land originally. They still don't need it, but they still have that particular clause attached to it.

This land needs to be given over to the city who uses it so they can make improvements on facilities that have been used since the 1800s. And that we

have to go through an actual law to do this, is a silly practice that we maintain here in Congress. It should not be done. This is a perfect example of why the reversionary clause is no longer needed.

If you really care about people, put a clause in there that says that if they want to change the practice, it has to be for the public interest and the public good. That would be logical. But what we have to do now is illogical in doing this particular bill. It needs to be done. It has to be done for the people who live there and for these properties, but it is silly that we have to go through this process.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I agree. I think no Member of Congress enjoys an unnecessary crawl back, but I think the majority of the Members of Congress recognize our duty to protect the public interest.

We resoundingly support what is a very, very good bill. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to adopt this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 805.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CALIFORNIA OFF-ROAD RECREATION AND CONSERVATION ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 857) to provide for conservation and enhanced recreation activities in the California Desert Conservation Area, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 857

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''California Off-Road Recreation and Conservation Act''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

SEC. 2. CALIFORNIA OFF-ROAD RECREATION AND CONSERVATION.

Public Law 103–433 (16 U.S.C. 410aaa et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''TITLE XIII—WILDERNESS

''SEC. 1301. DESIGNATION OF WILDERNESS AREAS.

''(a) DESIGNATION OF WILDERNESS AREAS TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT.—In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and sections 601 and 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1781, 1782), the following land in the State is designated as wilderness areas and as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System:

''(1) AVAWATZ MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS.—Certain land in the Conservation Area administered by the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, comprising approximately 91,800 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Avawatz Mountains Proposed Wilderness' and dated June 30, 2015, to be known as the 'Avawatz Mountains Wilderness'.

''(2) GOLDEN VALLEY WILDERNESS.—Certain land in the Conservation Area administered by the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, comprising approximately 1,250 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Golden Valley Proposed Wilderness Additions' and dated June 22, 2015, which shall be considered to be part of the 'Golden Valley Wilderness'.

''(3) GREAT FALLS BASIN WILDERNESS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Certain land in the Conservation Area administered by the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, comprising approximately 7,870 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Great Falls Basin Proposed Wilderness' and dated April 29, 2015, to be known as the 'Great Falls Basin Wilderness'.

''(B) LIMITATIONS.—Designation of the wilderness under subparagraph (A) shall not establish a Class I Airshed under the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.).

''(4) KINGSTON RANGE WILDERNESS.—Certain land in the Conservation Area administered by the Bureau of Land Management, comprising approximately 53,320 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Kingston Range Proposed Wilderness Additions' and dated February 18, 2015, which shall be considered to be a part of as the 'Kingston Range Wilderness'.

''(5) SODA MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS.—Certain land in the Conservation Area, administered by the Bureau of Land Management, comprising approximately 79,990 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Soda Mountains Proposed Wilderness' and dated February 18, 2015, to be known as the 'Soda Mountains Wilderness'.

''(b) DESIGNATION OF WILDERNESS AREAS TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.—In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) and sections 601 and 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1781, 1782), the following land in the State is designated as wilderness areas and as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System:

''(1) DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS ADDITIONS-NORTH EUREKA VALLEY.—Certain land in the Conservation Area administered by the Director of the National Park Service, comprising approximately 11,496 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Death Valley National Park Proposed Wilderness Area-North Eureka Valley', numbered 143/100,082C, and dated October 7, 2014, which shall be considered to be a part of the Death Valley National Park Wilderness.

''(2) DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS ADDITIONS-IBEX.—Certain land in the Conservation Area administered by the Director of the National Park Service, comprising approximately 23,650 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Death Valley National Park Proposed Wilderness Area-Ibex', numbered 143/100,081C, and dated October 7, 2014, which shall be considered to be a part of the Death Valley National Park Wilderness.

''(3) DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS ADDITIONS-PANAMINT VALLEY.—Certain land in the Conservation Area administered by the Director of the National Park Service, comprising approximately 4,807 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Death Valley National Park Proposed Wilderness Area-Panamint Valley', numbered 143/100,083C, and dated October 7, 2014, which shall be considered to be a part of the Death Valley National Park Wilderness.

''(4) DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS ADDITIONS-WARM SPRINGS.—Certain land in the Conservation Area administered by the Director of the National Park Service, comprising approximately 10,485 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Death Valley National Park Proposed Wilderness Area-Warm Spring Canyon/Galena Canyon', numbered 143/100,084C, and dated October 7, 2014, which shall be considered to be a part of the Death Valley National Park Wilderness.

''(5) DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS ADDITIONS-AXE HEAD.—Certain land in the Conservation Area administered by the Director of the National Park Service, comprising approximately 8,638 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Death Valley National Park Proposed Wilderness Area-Axe Head', numbered 143/100,085C, and dated October 7, 2014, which shall be considered to be a part of the Death Valley National Park Wilderness.

''(6) DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS ADDITIONS-BOWLING ALLEY.—Certain land in the Conservation Area administered by the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, comprising approximately 28,923 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Death Valley National Park Proposed Wilderness Area-Bowling Alley', numbered 143/128,606, and dated May 14, 2015, which shall be considered to be a part of the Death Valley National Park Wilderness.

''(c) DESIGNATION OF WILDERNESS AREA TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE FOREST SERVICE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), the land in the State described in paragraph (2) is designated as a wilderness area and as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

''(2) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in paragraph (1) is certain land in the San Bernardino National Forest, comprising approximately 7,141 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'San Gorgonio Proposed Wilderness Expansion,' and dated November 2, 2016, which shall considered to be a part of the San Gorgonio Wilderness.

''(3) FIRE MANAGEMENT AND RELATED ACTIVITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may carry out such activities in the wilderness area designated by paragraph (1) as are necessary for the control of fire, insects, and disease, in accordance with section 4(d)(1) of the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1133(d)(1)) and House Report 98–40 of the 98th Congress.

''(B) FUNDING PRIORITIES.—Nothing in this subsection limits the provision of any funding for fire or fuel management in the wilderness area designated by paragraph (1).

''(C) REVISION AND DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANS.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall amend the local fire management plans that apply to the wilderness area designated by paragraph (1).

''(D) ADMINISTRATION.—In accordance with subparagraph (A) and other applicable Federal law, to ensure a timely and efficient response to fire emergencies in the wilderness area designated by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

''(i) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this title, establish agency approval procedures (including appropriate delegations of authority to the Forest Supervisor, District Manager, or other agency officials) for responding to fire emergencies in the wilderness area designated by paragraph (1); and

''(ii) enter into agreements with appropriate State or local firefighting agencies relating to that wilderness area.

''SEC. 1302. MANAGEMENT.

''(a) ADJACENT MANAGEMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this title creates any protective perimeter or buffer zone around the wilderness areas designated by section 1301.

''(2) ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE WILDERNESS AREAS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The fact that an activity (including military activities) or use on land outside a wilderness area designated by section 1301 can be seen or heard within the wilderness area shall not preclude or restrict the activity or use outside the boundary of the wilderness area.

''(B) EFFECT ON NONWILDERNESS ACTIVITIES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—In any permitting proceeding (including a review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)) conducted with respect to a project described in clause (ii) that is formally initiated through a notice in the Federal Register before December 31, 2013, the consideration of any visual, noise, or other impacts of the project on a wilderness area designated by section 1301 shall be conducted based on the status of the area before designation as wilderness.

''(ii) DESCRIPTION OF PROJECTS.—A project referred to in clause (i) is a renewable energy project or associated energy transport facility project—

''(I) for which the Bureau of Land Management has received a right-of-way use application on or before the date of enactment of this title; and

''(II) that is located outside the boundary of a wilderness area designated by section 1301.

''(3) NO ADDITIONAL REGULATION.—Nothing in this title requires additional regulation of activities on land outside the boundary of the wilderness areas.

''(4) EFFECT ON MILITARY OPERATIONS.—Nothing in this title alters any authority of the Secretary of Defense to conduct any military operations at desert installations, facilities, and ranges of the State that are authorized under any other provision of law.

''(5) EFFECT ON UTILITY FACILITIES AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), nothing in this title terminates or precludes the renewal or reauthorization of any valid existing right-of-way or customary operation, maintenance, repair, upgrading, or replacement activities in a right-of-way, issued, granted, or permitted to the Southern California Edison Company or predecessors, successors, or assigns of the Southern California Edison Company that is located on land included in the San Gorgonio Wilderness Area or the Sand to Snow National Monument.

''(B) LIMITATION.—The activities described in subparagraph (A) shall be conducted in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) for the San Gorgonio Wilderness Area and in a manner compatible with the protection of objects and values for which the Sand to Snow National Monument was designated.

''(C) APPLICABLE LAW.—In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), any approval required for an increase in the voltage of the Coachella distribution circuit shall require consideration of alternative alignments, including alignments adjacent to State Route 62.

''(b) MAPS; LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall file a map and legal description of each wilderness area and wilderness addition designated by section 1301 with—

''(A) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

''(2) FORCE OF LAW.—A map and legal description filed under paragraph (1) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this title, except that the Secretary may correct errors in the maps and legal descriptions.

''(3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under paragraph (1) shall be filed and made available for public inspection in the appropriate office of the Secretary.

''(c) ADMINISTRATION.—Subject to valid existing rights, the land designated as wilderness or as a wilderness addition by section 1301 shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with this Act and the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), except that any reference in that Act to the Secretary of Agriculture shall also be considered to be a reference to the Secretary of the Interior, and any reference to the effective date shall be considered to be a reference to the date of enactment of this title.

''SEC. 1303. RELEASE OF WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS.

''(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that, for purposes of section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1782), any portion of a wilderness study area described in subsection (b) that is not designated as a wilderness area or wilderness addition by section 1301 or any other Act enacted before the date of enactment of this title has been adequately studied for wilderness.

''(b) DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREAS.—The study areas referred to in subsection (a) are—

''(1) the Cady Mountains Wilderness Study Area;

''(2) the Kingston Range Wilderness Study Area;

''(3) the Avawatz Mountain Wilderness Study Area;

''(4) the Death Valley National Park Boundary and Wilderness Study Area;

''(5) the Great Falls Basin Wilderness Study Area; and

''(6) the Soda Mountains Wilderness Study Area.

''(c) RELEASE.—Any portion of a wilderness study area described in subsection (b) that is not designated as a wilderness area or wilderness addition by section 1301 is no longer subject to section 603(c) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1782(c)).

''SEC. 1304. TREATMENT OF CHERRY-STEMMED ROADS.

''(a) DEFINITION OF CHERRY-STEMMED ROAD.—In this section, the term 'cherry-stemmed road' means a road or trail that is excluded from a wilderness area or wilderness addition designated by section 202 by a non-wilderness corridor having designated wilderness on both sides, as generally depicted on the maps described in such section.

''(b) PROHIBITION ON CLOSURE OR TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS ON CHERRY-STEMMED ROADS.—The Secretary concerned shall not—

''(1) close any cherry-stemmed road that is open to the public as of the date of the enactment of this Act;

''(2) prohibit motorized access on a cherry-stemmed road that is open to the public for motorized access as of the date of the enactment of this Act; or

''(3) prohibit mechanized access on a cherry-stemmed road that is open to the public for mechanized access as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

''(c) RESOURCE PROTECTION OR PUBLIC SAFETY EXCEPTIONS.—Subsection (b) shall not apply to a cherry-stemmed road if the Secretary concerned determines that a closure or traffic restriction of the cherry-stemmed road is necessary for purposes of significant resource protection or public safety.

''SEC. 1305. DESIGNATION OF POTENTIAL WILDERNESS AREA.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Certain land administered by the National Park Service, comprising approximately 1 acre as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Proposed Potential Wilderness, Mormon Peak Microwave Facility, Death Valley National Park' and dated March 1, 2018, is designated as a potential wilderness area.

''(b) USES.—The Secretary shall permit only the uses on the land described in subsection (a) that were permitted on the date of enactment of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–433).

''(c) REESTABLISHMENT OF WILDERNESS DESIGNATION.—

''(1) NOTICE.—The Secretary shall publish a notice in the Federal Register when the Secretary determines that—

''(A) the communications site within the potential wilderness area designated under subsection (a) is no longer used;

''(B) the associated right-of-way is relinquished or not renewed; and

''(C) the conditions in the potential wilderness area designated by subparagraph (a) are compatible with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).

''(2) DESIGNATION.—Upon publication by the Secretary of the notice described in paragraph (1), the land described in subsection (a) shall be—

''(A) designated as wilderness and as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System; and

''(B) incorporated into the Death Valley National Park Wilderness designated by section 601 of Public Law 103–433.

''TITLE XIV—NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM ADDITIONS

''SEC. 1401. DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY REVISION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The boundary of Death Valley National Park is adjusted to include—

''(1) the approximately 28,923 acres of Bureau of Land Management land in Inyo County, California, abutting the southern end of the Death Valley National Park that lies between Death Valley National Park to the north and Ft. Irwin Military Reservation to the south and which runs approximately 34 miles from west to east, as depicted on the map entitled 'Death Valley National Park Proposed Boundary Addition-Bowling Alley', numbered 143/128,605, and dated May 14, 2015; and

''(2) the approximately 6,369 acres of Bureau of Land Management land in Inyo County, California, located in the northeast area of Death Valley National Park that is within, and surrounded by, land under the jurisdiction of the Director of the National Park Service, as depicted on the map entitled 'Death Valley National Park Proposed Boundary Addition-Crater', numbered 143/100,079C, and dated October 7, 2014.

''(b) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The maps described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

''(c) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this title as the 'Secretary') shall—

''(1) administer any land added to Death Valley National Park under subsection (a)—

''(A) as part of Death Valley National Park; and

''(B) in accordance with applicable laws (including regulations); and

''(2) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, enter into a memorandum of understanding with Inyo County, California, to permit operationally feasible, ongoing access and use (including, but not limited to, material storage as well as excavation) to gravel pits in existence as of that date along Saline Valley Road within Death Valley National Park for road maintenance and repairs in accordance with applicable laws (including regulations).

''(d) ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION.—To ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.), and Department of the Interior policy, prior to the transfer of any of the lands described in subsection (a) to the National Park Service, the land shall be fully investigated for contamination in accordance with applicable environmental due diligence standards of the disposing agency and, within three years from the date of enactment of this subsection, the disposing

agency shall undertake any environmental remediation or clean up activities and pay for such activities relating to facilities, land or interest in land identified for transfer.

"SEC. 1402. MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE.

''The boundary of the Mojave National Preserve is adjusted to include the 25 acres of Bureau of Land Management land in Baker, California, as depicted on the map entitled 'Mojave National Preserve Proposed Boundary Addition', numbered 170/100,199, and dated August 2009.

"SEC. 1403. JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY REVISION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The boundary of the Joshua Tree National Park is adjusted to include—

''(1) the 2,879 acres of land managed by Director of the Bureau of Land Management that are contiguous at several different places to the northern boundaries of Joshua Tree National Park in the northwest section of the Park, as depicted on the map entitled 'Joshua Tree National Park Proposed Boundary Additions', numbered 156/100,077, and dated August 2009; and

''(2) the 1,639 acres of land to be acquired from the Mojave Desert Land Trust that are contiguous at several different places to the northern boundaries of Joshua Tree National Park in the northwest section of the Park, as depicted on the map entitled 'Mojave Desert Land Trust National Park Service Additions', numbered 156/126,376, and dated September 2014.

''(b) AVAILABILITY OF MAPS.—The map described in subsection (a) and the map depicting the 25 acres described in subsection (c)(2) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

''(c) ADMINISTRATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer any land added to the Joshua Tree National Park under subsection (a) and the additional land described in paragraph (2)—

''(A) as part of Joshua Tree National Park; and

''(B) in accordance with applicable laws (including regulations).

''(2) DESCRIPTION OF ADDITIONAL LAND.—The additional land referred to in paragraph (1) is the 25 acres of land—

''(A) depicted on the map entitled 'Joshua Tree National Park Boundary Adjustment Map', numbered 156/80,049, and dated April 1, 2003;

''(B) added to Joshua Tree National Park by the notice of the Department of the Interior of August 28, 2003 (68 Fed. Reg. 51799); and

''(C) more particularly described as lots 26, 27, 28, 33, and 34 in sec. 34, T. 1 N., R. 8 E., San Bernardino Meridian.

''(d) SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY ENERGY TRANSPORT FACILITIES AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this title terminates any valid right-of-way for the customary operation, maintenance, upgrade, repair, relocation within an existing right-of-way, replacement, or other authorized energy transport facility activities in a right-of-way issued, granted, or permitted to the Southern California Edison Company or the predecessors, successors, or assigns of the Southern California Edison Company that is located on land described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a), including, at a minimum, the use of mechanized vehicles, helicopters, or other aerial devices.

''(2) UPGRADES AND REPLACEMENTS.—Nothing in this title prohibits the upgrading or replacement of—

''(A) Southern California Edison Company energy transport facilities, including the energy transport facilities referred to as the Jellystone, Burnt Mountain, Whitehorn, Allegra, and Utah distribution circuits rights-of-way; or

''(B) an energy transport facility in rights-of-way issued, granted, or permitted by the Secretary adjacent to Southern California Edison Joshua Tree Utility Facilities.

''(3) PUBLICATION OF PLANS.—Not later than the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this title or the issuance of a new energy transport facility right-of-way within the Joshua Tree National Park, whichever is earlier, the Secretary, in consultation with the Southern California Edison Company, shall publish plans for regular and emergency access by the Southern California Edison Company to the rights-of-way of the Southern California Edison Company within Joshua Tree National Park.

"TITLE XV—OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION AREAS

"SEC. 1501. DESIGNATION OF OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION AREAS.

''(a) DESIGNATION.—In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) and resource management plans developed under this title and subject to valid rights, the following land within the Conservation Area in San Bernardino County, California, is designated as Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Areas:

''(1) DUMONT DUNES OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION AREA.—Certain Bureau of Land Management land in the Conservation Area, comprising approximately 7,630 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Dumont Dunes OHV Recreation Area' and dated February 22, 2018, which shall be known as the 'Dumont Dunes Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area'.

''(2) EL MIRAGE OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION AREA.—Certain Bureau of Land Management land in the Conservation Area, comprising approximately 14,930 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'El Mirage Proposed OHV Recreation Area' and dated February 22, 2018, which shall be known as the 'El Mirage Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area'.

''(3) RASOR OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION AREA.—Certain Bureau of Land Management land in the Conservation Area, comprising approximately 23,910 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Rasor Proposed OHV Recreation Area' and dated March 9, 2018, which shall be known as the 'Rasor Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area'.

''(4) SPANGLER HILLS OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION AREA.—Certain Bureau of Land Management land in the Conservation Area, comprising approximately 56,140 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Spangler Hills Proposed OHV Recreation Area' and dated March 9, 2018, which shall be known as the 'Spangler Hills Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area'.

''(5) STODDARD VALLEY OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION AREA.—Certain Bureau of Land Management land in the Conservation Area, comprising approximately 40,110 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Stoddard Valley Proposed OHV Recreation Area' and dated March 9, 2018, which shall be known as the 'Stoddard Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area'.

''(b) EXPANSION OF JOHNSON VALLEY OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE RECREATION AREA.—The Johnson Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area designated by section 2945 of the Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (division B of Public Law 113-66; 127 Stat. 1038) is expanded to include all of the land, approximately 11,300 acres, depicted as the 'Proposed Johnson Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area Additions' on the map entitled 'Johnson Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area' and dated March 15, 2018.

''(c) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the off-highway vehicle recreation areas designated or expanded under subsections (a) and (b) is to preserve and enhance the recreational opportunities within the Conservation Area (including opportunities for off-highway vehicle recreation), while conserving the wildlife and other natural resource values of the Conservation Area.

''(d) MAPS AND DESCRIPTIONS.—

''(1) PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall file a map and legal description of each off-highway vehicle recreation area designated or expanded by subsections (a) or (b) with—

''(A) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

''(2) LEGAL EFFECT.—The map and legal descriptions of the off-highway vehicle recreation areas filed under paragraph (1) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this title, except that the Secretary may correct errors in the map and legal descriptions.

''(3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under paragraph (1) shall be filed and made available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Bureau of Land Management.

''(e) USE OF THE LAND.—

''(1) RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall continue to authorize, maintain, and enhance the recreational uses of the off-highway vehicle recreation areas designated or expanded by subsections (a) and (b), including, but not limited to off-highway recreation, hiking, camping, hunting, mountain biking, sightseeing, rockhounding, and horseback riding, as long as the recreational use is consistent with this section, the protection of public health and safety, and any other applicable law.

''(B) OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE AND OFF-HIGHWAY RECREATION.—To the extent consistent with applicable Federal law (including regulations) and this section, any authorized recreation activities and use designations in effect on the date of enactment of this title and applicable to the off-highway vehicle recreation areas designated or expanded by subsections (a) and (b) shall continue, including casual off-highway vehicular use, racing, competitive events, rock crawling, training, and other forms of off-highway recreation.

''(2) WILDLIFE GUZZLERS.—Wildlife guzzlers shall be allowed in the off-highway vehicle recreation areas designated by subsection (a) in accordance with—

''(A) applicable Bureau of Land Management guidelines; and

''(B) State law.

''(3) PROHIBITED USES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Permanent commercial development (including development of energy facilities, but excluding energy transport facilities, rights-of-way, and related telecommunication facilities) shall be prohibited in the off-highway vehicle recreation areas designated or expanded by subsections (a) and (b) if the Secretary determines that the development is incompatible with the purpose of this title.

''(B) EXCEPTION FOR TEMPORARY PERMITTED VENDORS.—Subparagraph (A) does not prohibit a commercial vendor from establishing, pursuant to a temporary permit, a site in the off-highway vehicle recreation areas for the purpose of providing accessories and other support for off-highway vehicles and vehicles used for accessing the area.

''(f) ADMINISTRATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer the off-highway vehicle recreation areas designated or expanded by subsections (a) and (b) in accordance with—

''(A) this title;

''(B) the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and

''(C) any other applicable laws (including regulations).

''(2) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable, but not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary will evaluate and determine if current land use plans meet the intent of this Act. If not, the Secretary shall—

''(i) amend existing resource management plans applicable to the land designated as off-highway vehicle recreation areas under subsection (a); or

''(ii) develop new activity plans for each off-highway vehicle recreation area designated under that subsection.

''(B) REQUIREMENTS.—All new or amended plans under subparagraph (A) shall be designed to preserve and enhance safe off-highway vehicle and other recreational opportunities within the applicable recreation area consistent with—

''(i) the purpose described in subsection (c); and

''(ii) any applicable laws (including regulations).

''(C) INTERIM PLANS.—Pending completion of a new activity plan under subparagraph (A), the existing resource management plans shall govern the use of the applicable off-highway vehicle recreation area.

''(g) STUDY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable, but not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall complete a study to identify Bureau of Land Management land within the Conservation Area that is suitable for addition to—

''(A) the off-highway vehicle recreation areas designated by subsection (a) and (b); or

''(B) the Johnson Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area designated by section 2945 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113-66; 127 Stat. 1038).

''(2) STUDY AREAS.—The study required under paragraph (1) shall include—

''(A) certain Bureau of Land Management land in the Conservation Area, comprising approximately 41,000 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Spangler Hills Proposed OHV Recreation Area' and dated March 9, 2018;

''(B) certain Bureau of Land Management land in the Conservation Area, comprising approximately 680 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'El Mirage Proposed OHV Recreation Area' and dated February 22, 2018; and

''(C) certain Bureau of Land Management land in the Conservation Area, comprising approximately 10,300 acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled 'Johnson Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area' and dated March 15, 2018.

''(3) REQUIREMENTS.—In preparing the study under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

''(A) seek input from stakeholders, including—

''(i) the State, including—

''(I) the California Public Utilities Commission; and

''(II) the California Energy Commission;

''(ii) San Bernardino County, California;

''(iii) the public;

''(iv) recreational user groups;

''(v) conservation organizations;

''(vi) the Southern California Edison Company;

''(vii) the Pacific Gas and Electric Company; and

''(viii) other Federal agencies, including the Department of Defense;

''(B) explore the feasibility of—

''(i) expanding the southern boundary of the off-highway vehicle recreation area described in subsection (a)(3) to include previously disturbed land; and

''(ii) establishing a right of way for OHV use in the area identified in (g)(2), to the extent necessary to connect the non-contiguous areas of the Johnson Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area;

''(C) identify and exclude from consideration any land that—

''(i) is managed for conservation purposes;

''(ii) is identified as critical habitat for a listed species;

''(iii) may be suitable for renewable energy development; or

''(iv) may be necessary for energy transmission; and

''(D) not recommend or approve expansion of off-highway vehicle recreation areas within the Conservation Area that collectively would exceed the total acres administratively designated for off-highway recreation within the Conservation Area as of the day before the date of enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113-66; 127 Stat. 672).

''(4) APPLICABLE LAW.—The Secretary shall consider the information and recommendations of the study completed under paragraph (1) to determine the impacts of expanding off-highway vehicle recreation areas designated by subsection (a) on the Conservation Area, in accordance with—

''(A) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

''(B) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

''(C) applicable regulations and plans, including the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment; and

''(D) any other applicable law.

''(5) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—On completion of the study under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit the study to—

''(A) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives; and

''(B) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

''(6) AUTHORIZATION FOR EXPANSION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—On completion of the study under paragraph (1) and in accordance with all applicable laws (including regulations), the Secretary shall authorize the expansion of the off-highway vehicle recreation areas recommended under the study.

''(B) MANAGEMENT.—Any land within the expanded areas under subparagraph (A) shall be managed in accordance with this section.

''(h) SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY UTILITY FACILITIES AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY.—

''(1) EFFECT OF TITLE.—Nothing in this title—

''(A) terminates any validly issued right-of-way for the customary operation, maintenance, upgrade, repair, relocation within an existing right-of-way, replacement, or other authorized energy transport facility activities (including the use of any mechanized vehicle, helicopter, and other aerial device) in a right-of-way issued, granted, or permitted to Southern California Edison Company (including any predecessor or successor in interest or assign) that is located on land included in—

''(i) the El Mirage Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area;

''(ii) the Spangler Hills Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area; or

''(iii) the Stoddard Valley Off Highway Vehicle Recreation Area;

''(B) affects the application, siting, route selection, right-of-way acquisition, or construction of the Coolwater-Lugo transmission project, as may be approved by the California Public Utilities Commission and the Bureau of Land Management; or

''(C) prohibits the upgrading or replacement of any Southern California Edison Company—

''(i) utility facility, including such a utility facility known on the date of enactment of this title as—

''(I) 'Gale-PS 512 transmission lines or rights-of-way'; and

''(II) 'Patio, Jack Ranch, and Kenworth distribution circuits or rights-of-way'; and

''(ii) energy transport facility in a right-of-way issued, granted, or permitted by the Secretary adjacent to a utility facility referred to in clause (i).

''(2) PLANS FOR ACCESS.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Southern California Edison Company, shall publish plans for regular and emergency access by the Southern California Edison Company to the rights-of-way of the Company by the date that is 1 year after the later of—

''(A) the date of enactment of this title; and

''(B) the date of issuance of a new energy transport facility right-of-way within—

''(i) the El Mirage Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area;

''(ii) the Spangler Hills Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area; or

''(iii) the Stoddard Valley Off Highway Vehicle Recreation Area.

''(i) PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY UTILITY FACILITIES AND RIGHTS-OF-WAY.—

''(1) EFFECT OF TITLE.—Nothing in this title—

''(A) terminates any validly issued right-of-way for the customary operation, maintenance, upgrade, repair, relocation within an existing right-of-way, replacement, or other authorized activity (including the use of any mechanized vehicle, helicopter, and other aerial device) in a right-of-way issued, granted, or permitted to Pacific Gas and Electric Company (including any predecessor or successor in interest or assign) that is located on land included in the Spangler Hills Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area; or

''(B) prohibits the upgrading or replacement of any—

''(i) utility facilities of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, including those utility facilities known on the date of enactment of this title as—

''(I) Gas Transmission Line 311 or rights-of-way; and

''(II) Gas Transmission Line 372 or rights-of-way; and

''(ii) utility facilities of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company in rights-of-way issued, granted, or permitted by the Secretary adjacent to a utility facility referred to in clause (i).

''(2) PLANS FOR ACCESS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this title or the issuance of a new utility facility right-of-way within the Spangler Hills Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area, whichever is later, the Secretary, in consultation with the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, shall publish plans for regular and emergency access by the Pacific Gas and Electric Company to the rights-of-way of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

''TITLE XVI—ALABAMA HILLS NATIONAL SCENIC AREA

''SEC. 1601. DEFINITIONS.

''In this title:

''(1) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term 'management plan' means the management plan for the National Scenic Area developed under section 1603(a).

''(2) MAP.—The term 'Map' means the map titled 'Proposed Alabama Hills National Scenic Area', dated September 8, 2014.

''(3) MOTORIZED VEHICLES.—The term 'motorized vehicles' means motorized or mechanized vehicles and includes, when used by utilities, mechanized equipment, helicopters, and other aerial devices necessary to maintain electrical or communications infrastructure.

''(4) NATIONAL SCENIC AREA.—The term 'National Scenic Area' means the Alabama Hills National Scenic Area established by section 1602(a).

''(5) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Interior.

''(6) STATE.—The term 'State' means the State of California.

''(7) TRIBE.—The term 'Tribe' means the Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone.

''(8) UTILITY FACILITY.—The term 'utility facility' means any and all existing and future water system facilities including aqueducts, streams, ditches, and canals; water facilities including, but not limited to, flow measuring stations, gauges, gates, valves, piping, conduits, fencing, and electrical power and communications devices and systems; and any and all existing and future electric generation facilities, electric storage facilities, overhead and/or underground electrical supply systems and communication systems consisting of electric substations, electric lines, poles and towers made of

various materials, 'H' frame structures, guy wires and anchors, crossarms, wires, underground conduits, cables, vaults, manholes, handholes, above-ground enclosures, markers and concrete pads and other fixtures, appliances and communication circuits, and other fixtures, appliances and appurtenances connected therewith necessary or convenient for the construction, operation, regulation, control, grounding and maintenance of electric generation, storage, lines and communication circuits, for the purpose of transmitting intelligence and generating, storing, distributing, regulating and controlling electric energy to be used for light, heat, power, communication, and other purposes.

"SEC. 1602. ALABAMA HILLS NATIONAL SCENIC AREA, CALIFORNIA.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Subject to valid, existing rights, there is established in Inyo County, California, the Alabama Hills National Scenic Area. The National Scenic Area shall be comprised of the approximately 18,610 acres generally depicted on the Map as 'National Scenic Area'.

''(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the National Scenic Area is to conserve, protect, and enhance for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of present and future generations the nationally significant scenic, cultural, geological, educational, biological, historical, recreational, cinematographic, and scientific resources of the National Scenic Area managed consistent with section 302(a) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1732(a)).

''(c) MAP; LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall file a map and a legal description of the National Scenic Area with—

''(A) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and

''(B) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

''(2) FORCE OF LAW.—The map and legal descriptions filed under paragraph (1) shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act, except that the Secretary may correct any clerical and typographical errors in the map and legal descriptions.

''(3) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—Each map and legal description filed under paragraph (1) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

''(d) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall manage the National Scenic Area—

''(1) as a component of the National Landscape Conservation System;

''(2) so as not to impact the future continuing operations and maintenance of any activities associated with valid, existing rights, including water rights;

''(3) in a manner that conserves, protects, and enhances the resources and values of the National Scenic Area described in subsection (b); and

''(4) in accordance with—

''(A) the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.);

''(B) this Act; and

''(C) any other applicable laws.

''(e) MANAGEMENT.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall allow only such uses of the National Scenic Area as the Secretary determines would support the purposes of the National Scenic Area as described in subsection (b).

''(2) RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—Except as otherwise provided in this Act or other applicable law, or as the Secretary determines to be necessary for public health and safety, the Secretary shall allow existing recreational uses of the National Scenic Area to continue, including, but not limited to, hiking, mountain biking, rock climbing, sightseeing, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, and appropriate authorized motorized vehicle use.

''(3) MOTORIZED VEHICLES.—Except as specified within this Act and/or in cases in which motorized vehicles are needed for administrative purposes, or to respond to an emergency, the use of motorized vehicles in the National Scenic Area shall be permitted only on—

''(A) roads and trails designated by the Director of the Bureau of Land Management for use of motorized vehicles as part of a management plan sustaining a semi-primitive motorized experience; or

''(B) on county-maintained roads in accordance with applicable State and county laws.

''(f) NO BUFFER ZONES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act creates a protective perimeter or buffer zone around the National Scenic Area.

''(2) ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE NATIONAL SCENIC AREA.—The fact that an activity or use on land outside the National Scenic Area can be seen or heard within the National Scenic Area shall not preclude the activity or use outside the boundaries of the National Scenic Area.

''(g) ACCESS.—The Secretary shall continue to provide private landowners adequate access to inholdings in the National Scenic Area.

''(h) FILMING.—Nothing in this Act prohibits filming (including commercial film production, student filming, and still photography) within the National Scenic Area—

''(1) subject to—

''(A) such reasonable regulations, policies, and practices as the Secretary considers to be necessary; and

''(B) applicable law; and

''(2) in a manner consistent with the purposes described in subsection (b).

''(i) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—Nothing in this Act affects the jurisdiction or responsibilities of the State with respect to fish and wildlife.

''(j) LIVESTOCK.—The grazing of livestock in the National Scenic Area, including grazing under the Alabama Hills allotment and the George Creek allotment, as established before the date of enactment of this Act, shall be permitted to continue—

''(1) subject to—

''(A) such reasonable regulations, policies, and practices as the Secretary considers to be necessary; and

''(B) applicable law; and

''(2) in a manner consistent with the purposes described in subsection (b).

''(k) OVERFLIGHTS.—Nothing in this Act restricts or precludes flights over the National Scenic Area or overflights that can be seen or heard within the National Scenic Area, including—

''(1) transportation, sightseeing and filming flights, general aviation planes, helicopters, hang-gliders, and balloonists, for commercial or recreational purposes;

''(2) low-level overflights of military aircraft;

''(3) flight testing and evaluation;

''(4) the designation or creation of new units of special use airspace, or the establishment of military flight training routes, over the National Scenic Area; or

''(5) the use, including take-off and landing, of helicopters and other aerial devices within valid rights-of-way to construct or maintain energy transport facilities.

''(l) WITHDRAWAL.—Subject to this Act's provisions and valid rights in existence on the date of enactment of this Act, including rights established by prior withdrawals, the Federal land within the National Scenic Area is withdrawn from all forms of—

''(1) entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

''(2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

''(3) disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral and geothermal leasing or mineral materials.

''(m) WILDLAND FIRE OPERATIONS.—Nothing in this Act prohibits the Secretary, in cooperation with other Federal, State, and local agencies, as appropriate, from conducting wildland fire operations in the National Scenic Area, consistent with the purposes described in subsection (b).

''(n) GRANTS; COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may make grants to, or enter into cooperative agreements with, State, tribal, and local governmental entities and private entities to conduct research, interpretation, or public education or to carry out any other initiative relating to the restoration, conservation, or management of the National Scenic Area.

''(o) AIR AND WATER QUALITY.—Nothing in this Act modifies any standard governing air or water quality outside of the boundaries of the National Scenic Area.

''(p) UTILITY FACILITIES AND RIGHTS OF WAY.—

''(1) Nothing in this Act shall—

''(A) affect the existence, use, operation, maintenance (including but not limited to vegetation control), repair, construction, reconfiguration, expansion, inspection, renewal, reconstruction, alteration, addition, relocation, improvement, funding, removal, or replacement of utility facilities or appurtenant rights of way within or adjacent to the National Scenic Area;

''(B) affect necessary or efficient access to utility facilities or rights of way within or adjacent to the National Scenic Area subject to subsection (e); or

''(C) preclude the Secretary from authorizing the establishment of new utility facility rights of way (including instream sites, routes, and areas) within the National Scenic Area in a manner that minimizes harm to the purpose of the National Scenic Area as described in subsection (b)—

''(i) with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and any other applicable law;

''(ii) subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be appropriate; and

''(iii) are determined, by the Secretary, to be the only technical or feasible location, following consideration of alternatives within existing rights of way or outside of the National Scenic Area.

''(2) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—Consistent with this Act, the Management Plan shall establish plans for maintenance of public utility and other rights of way within the National Scenic Area.

"SEC. 1603. MANAGEMENT PLAN.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, in accordance with subsection (b), the Secretary shall develop a comprehensive plan for the long-term management of the National Scenic Area.

''(b) CONSULTATION.—In developing the management plan, the Secretary shall—

''(1) consult with appropriate State, tribal, and local governmental entities, including Inyo County and the Tribe; and

''(2) seek input from—

''(A) investor-owned utilities, including Southern California Edison Company;

''(B) the Alabama Hills Stewardship Group;

''(C) members of the public; and

''(D) the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

''(c) REQUIREMENT.—In accordance with this title, the management plan shall include provisions for maintenance of existing public utility and other rights-of-way within the National Scenic Area.

''(d) INCORPORATION OF MANAGEMENT PLAN.—In developing the management plan, in accordance with this section, the Secretary shall allow, in perpetuity, casual-use mining limited to the use of hand tools, metal detectors, hand-fed dry washers, vacuum cleaners, gold pans, small sluices, and similar items.

''(e) INTERIM MANAGEMENT.—Pending completion of the management plan, the Secretary shall manage the National Scenic Area in accordance with section 1602.

"SEC. 1604. LAND TAKEN INTO TRUST FOR LONE PINE PAIUTE-SHOSHONE RESERVATION.

''(a) TRUST LAND.—All right, title, and interest of the United States in and to the approximately 132 acres of Federal land depicted on the Map as 'Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Reservation Addition' shall be held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Tribe, subject to the following:

''(1) CONDITIONS.—The land shall be subject to all easements, covenants, conditions, restrictions, withdrawals, and other matters of record on the date of the enactment of this Act.

''(2) EXCLUSION.—The Federal lands over which the right-of-way for the Los Angeles Aqueduct is located, generally described as the 250-foot-wide right-of-way granted to the City of Los Angeles pursuant to the Act of June 30, 1906 (Chap. 3926), shall not be taken into trust for the Tribe.

''(b) SURVEY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall complete a survey of the boundary lines to establish the boundaries of the land taken into trust under subsection (a).

''(c) RESERVATION LAND.—The land taken into trust pursuant to subsection (a) shall be considered part of the reservation of the Tribe.

''(d) GAMING PROHIBITION.—Gaming under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.) shall not be allowed on the land taken into trust pursuant to subsection (a).

"SEC. 1605. TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE JURISDICTION.

''Administrative jurisdiction of the approximately 56 acres of Federal land depicted on the Map as 'USFS Transfer to BLM' is hereby transferred from the Forest Service under the Secretary of Agriculture to the Bureau of Land Management under the Secretary.

"SEC. 1606. PROTECTION OF SERVICES AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

''(a) EFFECT OF TITLE.—Nothing in this title shall be construed to limit commercial services for existing and historic recreation uses as authorized by the Bureau of Land Management's permit process.

''(b) GUIDED RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.—Commercial permits to exercise guided recreational opportunities for the public authorized as of the date of the enactment of this title may continue to be authorized.

"TITLE XVII—MISCELLANEOUS

"SEC. 1701. MILITARY ACTIVITIES.

''Nothing in this Act—

''(1) restricts or precludes Department of Defense motorized access by land or air—

''(A) to respond to an emergency within a wilderness area designated by this Act; or

''(B) to control access to the emergency site;

''(2) prevents nonmechanized military training activities previously conducted on wilderness areas designated by this title that are consistent with—

''(A) the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.); and

''(B) all applicable laws (including regulations);

''(3) restricts or precludes low-level overflights of military aircraft over the areas designated as wilderness, national monuments, special management areas, or recreation areas by this Act, including military overflights that can be seen or heard within the designated areas;

''(4) restricts or precludes flight testing and evaluation in the areas described in paragraph (3); or

''(5) restricts or precludes the designation or creation of new units of special use airspace, or the establishment of military flight training routes, over the areas described in paragraph (3).

"SEC. 1702. PROHIBITED USES OF ACQUIRED, DONATED, AND CONSERVATION LAND.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) ACQUIRED LAND.—The term 'acquired land' means any land acquired within the Conservation Area using amounts from funds such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund established under section 200302 of title 54, United States Code.

''(2) CONSERVATION LAND.—The term 'conservation land' means any land within the Conservation Area that is designated by the Bureau of Land Management in the California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as amended, for conservation purposes, as part of a mitigation agreement, or to satisfy the conditions of a Federal habitat conservation plan, general conservation plan, or State natural communities conservation plan, including—

''(A) National Conservation Land established pursuant to section 2002(b)(2)(D) of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 7202(b)(2)(D)); and

''(B) Areas of Critical Environmental Concern established pursuant to section 202(c)(3) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712(c)(3)).

''(3) DONATED LAND.—The term 'donated land' means any private land donated to the United States for conservation purposes in the Conservation Area.

''(4) DONOR.—The term 'donor' means an individual or entity that donates private land within the Conservation Area to the United States.

''(5) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

''(b) PROHIBITIONS.—Except as provided in subsection (c), the Secretary shall not authorize the use of acquired land, conservation land, or donated land within the Conservation Area for any activities contrary to the conservation purposes for which the land was acquired, designated, or donated, including—

''(1) disposal;

''(2) rights-of-way;

''(3) leases;

''(4) livestock grazing;

''(5) infrastructure development, except as provided in subsection (c);

''(6) mineral entry; and

''(7) off-highway vehicle use, except on—

''(A) designated routes;

''(B) off-highway vehicle areas designated by law; and

''(C) administratively designated open areas.

''(c) EXCEPTIONS.—

''(1) AUTHORIZATION BY SECRETARY.—Subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary may authorize limited exceptions to prohibited uses of acquired land or donated land in the Conservation Area if—

''(A) a right-of-way application for a renewable energy development project or associated energy transport facility on acquired land or donated land was submitted to the Bureau of Land Management on or before December 1, 2009; or

''(B) after the completion and consideration of an analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), and any appropriate land use plan amendment under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.), the Secretary has determined that proposed use is in the public interest.

''(2) CONDITIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary grants an exception to the prohibition under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall require the permittee to donate private land of comparable value located within the Conservation Area to the United States to mitigate the use.

''(B) APPROVAL.—The private land to be donated under subparagraph (A) shall be approved by the Secretary after—

''(i) consultation, to the maximum extent practicable, with the donor of the private land proposed for nonconservation uses; and

''(ii) an opportunity for public comment regarding the donation.

''(d) EXISTING AGREEMENTS.—Nothing in this section affects permitted or prohibited uses of donated land or acquired land in the Conservation Area established in any easements, deed restrictions, memoranda of understanding, or other agreements in existence on the date of enactment of this title.

''(e) DEED RESTRICTIONS.—Effective beginning on the date of enactment of this title, within the Conservation Area, the Secretary may—

''(1) accept deed restrictions requested by landowners for land donated to, or otherwise acquired by, the United States; and

''(2) consistent with existing rights, create deed restrictions, easements, or other third-party rights relating to any public land determined by the Secretary to be necessary—

''(A) to fulfill the mitigation requirements resulting from the development of renewable resources; or

''(B) to satisfy the conditions of—

''(i) a habitat conservation plan or general conservation plan established pursuant to section 10 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1539); or

''(ii) a natural communities conservation plan approved by the State.

''(f) EXISTING RIGHTS OF WAY AND LEASES.—Nothing in this section shall terminate or preclude the renewal or reauthorization of valid existing rights-of-way or leases on the donated land.

"SEC. 1703. TRIBAL USES AND INTERESTS.

''(a) ACCESS.—The Secretary shall ensure access to areas designated under this Act by members of Indian tribes for traditional cultural and religious purposes, consistent with applicable law, including Public Law 95–341 (commonly known as the 'American Indian Religious Freedom Act') (42 U.S.C. 1996).

''(b) TEMPORARY CLOSURE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with applicable law, including Public Law 95–341 (commonly known as the 'American Indian Religious Freedom Act') (42 U.S.C. 1996), and subject to paragraph (2), the Secretary, on request of an Indian tribe or Indian religious community, shall temporarily close to general public use any portion of an area designated as a national monument, special management area, wild and scenic river, area of critical environmental concern, or National Park System unit under this Act (referred to in this subsection as a 'designated area') to protect the privacy of traditional cultural and religious activities in the designated area by members of the Indian tribe or Indian religious community.

''(2) LIMITATION.—In closing a portion of a designated area under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall limit the closure to the smallest practicable area for the minimum period necessary for the traditional cultural and religious activities.

''(c) CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary of the Interior shall develop and implement a cultural resources management plan to identify, protect, and conserve cultural resources of Indian tribes associated with the Xam Kwatchan Trail network extending from Avikwaame (Spirit Mountain, Nevada) to Avikwlal (Pilot Knob, California).

''(2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult on the development and implementation of the cultural resources management plan under paragraph (1) with—

''(A) each of—

''(i) the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe;

''(ii) the Hualapai Tribal Nation;

''(iii) the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe;

''(iv) the Colorado River Indian Tribes;

''(v) the Quechan Indian Tribe; and

''(vi) the Cocopah Indian Tribe; and

''(B) the State Historic Preservation Offices of Nevada, Arizona, and California.

''(3) RESOURCE PROTECTION.—The cultural resources management plan developed under paragraph (1) shall be—

''(A) based on a completed cultural resources survey; and

''(B) include procedures for identifying, protecting, and preserving petroglyphs, ancient trails, intaglios, sleeping circles, artifacts, and other resources of cultural, archaeological, or historical significance in accordance with all applicable laws and policies, including—

''(i) chapter 2003 of title 54, United States Code;

''(ii) Public Law 95–341 (commonly known as the 'American Indian Religious Freedom Act') (42 U.S.C. 1996);

''(iii) the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (16 U.S.C. 470aa et seq.);

''(iv) the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.); and

''(v) Public Law 103–141 (commonly known as the 'Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993') (42 U.S.C. 2000bb et seq.).

''(d) WITHDRAWAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, all Federal land within the area administratively withdrawn and known as the 'Indian Pass Withdrawal Area' is permanently withdrawn from—

''(1) all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;

''(2) location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

''(3) right-of-way leasing and disposition under all laws relating to minerals or solar, wind, or geothermal energy.

''SEC. 1704. RELEASE OF FEDERAL REVERSIONARY LAND INTERESTS.

''(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) 1932 ACT.—The '1932 Act' means the Act of June 18, 1932 (47 Stat. 324, chapter 270).

''(2) DISTRICT.—The 'District' means the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

''(b) RELEASE.—Subject to valid existing claims perfected prior to the effective date of the 1932 Act and the reservation of minerals set forth in the 1932 Act, the Secretary shall release, convey, or otherwise quitclaim to the District, in a form recordable in local county records, and subject to the approval of the District, after consultation and without monetary consideration, all right, title, and remaining interest of the United States in and to the land that was conveyed to the District pursuant to the 1932 Act or any other law authorizing conveyance subject to restrictions or reversionary interests retained by the United States, on request by the District.

''(c) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A conveyance authorized by subsection (b) shall be subject to the following terms and conditions:

''(1) The District shall cover, or reimburse the Secretary for, the costs incurred by the Secretary to make the conveyance, including title searches, surveys, deed preparation, attorneys' fees, and similar expenses.

''(2) By accepting the conveyances, the District agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States with regard to any boundary dispute relating to any parcel conveyed under this section.

''SEC. 1705. DESERT TORTOISE CONSERVATION CENTER.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the 'Secretary') shall establish, operate, and maintain a bi-State center, to be known as the 'Desert Tortoise Conservation Center' (referred to in this section as the 'Center'), on public land along the border between the States of California and Nevada—

''(1) to support desert tortoise research, disease monitoring, handling training, rehabilitation, and reintroduction; and

''(2) to ensure the full recovery and ongoing survival of the desert tortoise species.

''(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

''(1) seek the participation of or contract with qualified nongovernmental organizations with expertise in desert tortoise disease research and experience with desert tortoise translocation techniques, and scientific training of professional biologists for handling tortoises, to staff and manage the Center, including through the use of public-private partnerships for funding and other purposes, where appropriate;

''(2) ensure that the Center engages in public outreach and education on tortoise handling; and

''(3) consult with the States of California and Nevada to ensure the center is operated consistently with applicable State law.

''(c) NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS.—The Secretary may accept and expend contributions of non-Federal funds to establish, operate, and maintain the Center.

''SEC. 1706. WILDLIFE CORRIDORS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

''(1) assess the impacts of habitat fragmentation on wildlife in the Conservation Area; and

''(2) establish policies and procedures to ensure the preservation of wildlife corridors and facilitate species migration.

''(b) STUDY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—As soon as practicable, but not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall complete a study regarding the impact of habitat fragmentation on wildlife in the Conservation Area.

''(2) COMPONENTS.—The study under paragraph (1) shall—

''(A) identify the species migrating, or likely to migrate, in the Conservation Area;

''(B) examine the impacts and potential impacts of habitat fragmentation on—

''(i) plants, insects, and animals; and

''(ii) species migration and survival;

''(C) identify critical wildlife and species migration corridors recommended for preservation; and

''(D) include recommendations for ensuring the biological connectivity of public land managed by the Secretary and the Secretary of Defense throughout the Conservation Area.

''(3) RIGHTS-OF-WAY.—The Secretary shall consider the information and recommendations of the study under paragraph (1) to determine the individual and cumulative impacts of rights-of-way for projects in the Conservation Area, in accordance with—

''(A) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

''(B) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); and

''(C) any other applicable law.

''(c) LAND MANAGEMENT PLANS.—The Secretary shall incorporate into all land management plans applicable to the Conservation Area the findings and recommendations of the study completed under subsection (b).''.

SEC. 3. VISITOR CENTER.

Title IV of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 (16 U.S.C. 410aaa–21 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 408. VISITOR CENTER.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may acquire not more than 5 acres of land and interests in land, and improvements on the land and interests, outside the boundaries of Joshua Tree National Park, in the unincorporated village of Joshua Tree, for the purpose of operating a visitor center.

''(b) BOUNDARY.—The Secretary shall modify the boundary of the park to include the land acquired under this section as a noncontiguous parcel.

''(c) ADMINISTRATION.—Land and facilities acquired under this section—

''(1) may include the property owned (as of the date of enactment of this section) by the Joshua Tree National Park Association and commonly referred to as the 'Joshua Tree National Park Visitor Center';

''(2) shall be administered by the Secretary as part of the park; and

''(3) may be acquired only with the consent of the owner, by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange.''.

SEC. 4. CALIFORNIA STATE SCHOOL LAND.

Section 707 of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 (16 U.S.C. 410aaa–77) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in the first sentence—

(i) by striking ''Upon request of the California State Lands Commission (hereinafter in this section referred to as the 'Commission'), the Secretary shall enter into negotiations for an agreement'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall negotiate in good faith to reach an agreement with the California State Lands Commission (referred to in this section as the Commission)''; and

(ii) by inserting '', national monuments, off-highway vehicle recreation areas,'' after ''more of the wilderness areas''; and

(B) in the second sentence, by striking ''The Secretary shall negotiate in good faith to'' and inserting the following:

''(2) AGREEMENT.—To the maximum extent practicable, not later than 10 years after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall'';

(2) in subsection (b)(1), by inserting '', national monuments, off-highway vehicle recreation areas,'' after ''wilderness areas'';

(3) in subsection (c), by adding at the end the following:

''(5) SPECIAL DEPOSIT FUND ACCOUNT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Assembled land exchanges may be used to carry out this section through the sale of surplus Federal property and subsequent acquisitions of State school land.

''(B) RECEIPTS.—Past and future receipts from the sale of property described in subsection (a), less any costs incurred related to the sale, shall be deposited in a Special Deposit Fund Account established in the Treasury.

''(C) USE.—Funds accumulated in the Special Deposit Fund Account may be used by the Secretary, without an appropriation, to acquire State school lands or interest in the land consistent with this section.''; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT.—

''(1) Any transaction completed pursuant to this section prior to January 1, 2018:

''(A) is deemed to be in compliance with the terms of the October 26, 1995, Memorandum of Agreement between the commission, the general services administration, and the Secretary; and

''(B) meets the requirements of subsection (a) of this section.

''(2) Future transactions that satisfy the terms of the October 26, 1995, Memorandum of Agreement shall be considered to be in compliance with subsection (a) of this section.''.

SEC. 5. DESIGNATION OF WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS.

Section 3(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1274(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (196), by striking subparagraph (A) and inserting the following:

''(A)(i) The approximately 1.4-mile segment of the Amargosa River in the State of California, from the private property boundary in sec. 19, T. 22 N., R. 7 E., to 100 feet downstream of Highway 178, to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior as a scenic river as an addition to the wild and scenic river segments of the Amargosa River on publication by the Secretary of a notice in the Federal Register that sufficient inholdings within the boundaries of the segments have been acquired as scenic easements or in fee title to establish a manageable addition to those segments.

''(ii) The approximately 6.1-mile segment of the Amargosa River in the State of California, from 100 feet downstream of the State Highway 178 crossing to 100 feet upstream of the Tecopa Hot Springs Road crossing, to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior as a scenic river.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(213) SURPRISE CANYON CREEK, CALIFORNIA.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The following segments of Surprise Canyon Creek in the State of California, to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior:

''(i) The approximately 5.3 miles of Surprise Canyon Creek from the confluence of Frenchman's Canyon and Water Canyon to 100 feet upstream of Chris Wicht Camp, as a wild river.

''(ii) The approximately 1.8 miles of Surprise Canyon Creek from 100 feet upstream of Chris Wicht Camp to the southern boundary of sec. 14, T. 21 S., R. 44 E., Mount Diablo Meridian, as a recreational river.

''(B) EFFECT ON HISTORIC MINING STRUCTURES.—Nothing in this paragraph affects the historic mining structures associated with the former Panamint Mining District.

''(214) DEEP CREEK, CALIFORNIA.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The following segments of Deep Creek in the State of California, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture:

''(i) The approximately 6.5-mile segment from 0.125 mile downstream of the Rainbow Dam site in sec. 33, T. 2 N., R. 2 W., San Bernardino Meridian to 0.25 miles upstream of the Road 3N34 crossing, as a wild river.

''(ii) The 0.5-mile segment from 0.25 mile upstream of the Road 3N34 crossing to 0.25 mile downstream of the Road 3N34 crossing, as a scenic river.

''(iii) The 2.5-mile segment from 0.25 miles downstream of the Road 3 N. 34 crossing to 0.25 miles upstream of the Trail 2W01 crossing, as a wild river.

''(iv) The 0.5-mile segment from 0.25 miles upstream of the Trail 2W01 crossing to 0.25 mile downstream of the Trail 2W01 crossing, as a scenic river.

''(v) The 10-mile segment from 0.25 miles downstream of the Trail 2W01 crossing to the upper limit of the Mojave dam flood zone in sec. 17, T. 3 N., R. 3 W., San Bernardino Meridian, as a wild river.

''(vi) The 11-mile segment of Holcomb Creek from 100 yards downstream of the Road 3N12 crossing to .25 miles downstream of Holcomb Crossing, as a recreational river.

''(vii) The 3.5-mile segment of the Holcomb Creek from 0.25 miles downstream of Holcomb Crossing to the Deep Creek confluence, as a wild river.

''(B) EFFECT ON SKI OPERATIONS.—Nothing in this paragraph affects—

''(i) the operations of the Snow Valley Ski Resort; or

''(ii) the State regulation of water rights and water quality associated with the operation of the Snow Valley Ski Resort.

''(215) WHITEWATER RIVER, CALIFORNIA.—The following segments of the Whitewater River in the State of California, to be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior, acting jointly:

''(A) The 5.8-mile segment of the North Fork Whitewater River from the source of the River near Mt. San Gorgonio to the confluence with the Middle Fork, as a wild river.

''(B) The 6.4-mile segment of the Middle Fork Whitewater River from the source of the River to the confluence with the South Fork, as a wild river.

''(C) The 1-mile segment of the South Fork Whitewater River from the confluence of the River with the East Fork to the section line between sections 32 and 33, T. 1 S., R. 2 E., San Bernardino Meridian, as a wild river.

''(D) The 1-mile segment of the South Fork Whitewater River from the section line between sections 32 and 33, T. 1 S., R. 2 E., San Bernardino Meridian, to the section line between sections 33 and 34, T. 1 S., R. 2 E., San Bernardino Meridian, as a recreational river.

''(E) The 4.9-mile segment of the South Fork Whitewater River from the section line between sections 33 and 34, T. 1 S., R. 2 E., San Bernardino Meridian, to the confluence with the Middle Fork, as a wild river.

''(F) The 5.4-mile segment of the main stem of the Whitewater River from the confluence of the South and Middle Forks to the San Gorgonio Wilderness boundary, as a wild river.

''(G) The 3.6-mile segment of the main stem of the Whitewater River from the San Gorgonio Wilderness boundary to .25 miles upstream of the southern boundary of section 35, T. 2 S., R. 3 E., San Bernardino Meridian, as a recreational river.''.

SEC. 6. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—Section 1 of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 (16 U.S.C. 410aaa note; Public Law 103–433) is amended by striking ''1 and 2, and titles I through IX'' and inserting ''1, 2, and 3, titles I through IX, and titles XIII through XVII''.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—The California Desert Protection Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–433; 108 Stat. 4481) is amended by inserting after section 2 the following:

''SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

''In titles XIII through XVII:

''(1) CONSERVATION AREA.—The term 'Conservation Area' means the California Desert Conservation Area.

''(2) SECRETARY.—The term 'Secretary' means—

''(A) with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of the Interior; and

''(B) with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Agriculture.

''(3) STATE.—The term 'State' means the State of California.''.

(c) ADMINISTRATION OF WILDERNESS AREAS.—Section 103 of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–433; 108 Stat. 4481) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

''(d) NO BUFFER ZONES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Congress does not intend for the designation of wilderness areas by this Act—

''(A) to require the additional regulation of land adjacent to the wilderness areas; or

''(B) to lead to the creation of protective perimeters or buffer zones around the wilderness areas.

''(2) NONWILDERNESS ACTIVITIES.—Any nonwilderness activities (including renewable energy projects, energy transmission or telecommunications projects, mining, and military activities) in areas immediately adjacent to the boundary of a wilderness area designated by this Act shall not be restricted or precluded by this Act, regardless of any actual or perceived negative impacts of the nonwilderness activities on the wilderness area, including any potential indirect impacts of nonwilderness activities conducted outside the designated wilderness area on the viewshed, ambient noise level, or air quality of wilderness area.'';

(2) in subsection (f), by striking ''designated by this title and'' and inserting '', potential wilderness areas, special management areas, and national monuments designated by this title or titles XIII through XVII''; and

(3) in subsection (g), by inserting '', a potential wilderness area, a special management areas, or national monument'' before ''by this Act''.

(d) JUNIPER FLATS.—Title VII of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–433; 108 Stat. 4497) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 712. JUNIPER FLATS.

''Development of renewable energy generation facilities (excluding rights-of-way or facilities for the transmission of energy and telecommunication facilities and infrastructure) is prohibited on the approximately 28,000 acres of Federal land generally depicted as 'BLM Land Unavailable for Energy Development' on the map entitled 'Juniper Flats' and dated April 26, 2018.''.

(e) CALIFORNIA MILITARY LANDS WITHDRAWAL AND OVERFLIGHTS ACT OF 1994.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Section 801(b)(2) of the California Military Lands Withdrawal and Overflights Act of 1994 (16 U.S.C. 410aaa–82 note; Public Law 103–433) is amended by inserting '', special management areas, potential wilderness areas,'' before ''and wilderness areas''.

(2) OVERFLIGHTS; SPECIAL AIRSPACE.—Section 802 of the California Military Lands Withdrawal and Overflights Act of 1994 (16 U.S.C. 410aaa–82) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by inserting ''or special management areas'' before ''designated by this Act'';

(B) in subsection (b), by inserting ''or special management areas'' before ''designated by this Act''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

''(d) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FACILITIES.—Nothing in this Act alters any authority of the Secretary of Defense to conduct military operations at installations and ranges within the California Desert Conservation Area that are authorized under any other provision of law.''.

(f) CLARIFICATION REGARDING FUNDING.—No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. COOK), whose bill we are discussing, and who actually came up with the process of involving his community to do this kind of transfer the right way.

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BISHOP for yielding me the time.

I would like to take a few minutes to talk about my bill, H.R. 857, the California Off-Road Recreational and Conservation Act. The California desert has long been a land of many uses. The local economies depend on a combination of revenue from recreational off-highway vehicle use, known as OHV, mining, and tourism to our stunning desert parks and wilderness areas.

Balancing these economic drivers is key to aligning Federal land use policies. This bill is the product of years of outreach to local governments, Tribes, off-highway vehicle users, conservation groups, chambers of commerce, miners, and other stakeholders.

H.R. 857 will establish five off-highway vehicle recreational areas in the California desert, as well as expand an existing OHV area. Three of these OHV areas would also include expansion study areas. In total, these 6 OHV areas cover 300,000 acres.

This bill creates additional protections for OHV users and ensures that these areas cannot be closed administratively. Creating the Nation's first

system of off-highway vehicle recreation areas will ensure that OHV activity is conducted in appropriate locations, protecting other parts of the desert.

The California Desert Protection Act of 1994 left the Mojave Desert with hundreds of thousands of acres of wilderness study areas. In a decade since then, these areas have been reviewed extensively for their suitability as wilderness areas.

My bill would designate some of these areas as wilderness, primarily within these wilderness study areas and Death Valley National Park, while releasing other areas from the wilderness study that were found to be unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Additionally, my bill would designate approximately 18,000 acres of existing Federal land as the Alabama Hills National Scenic Area. This would restrict large-scale projects, such as renewable energy generation, while preserving all existing recreational and commercial use of Alabama Hills. Activities such as filming, hiking, mountain biking, rock climbing, hunting, fishing, and authorized motorized vehicle use would be unaffected. Additionally, recreational mineral prospecting, i.e., rockhounding, would continue.

This portion of H.R. 857 passed the House as a stand-alone bill in the last Congress with unanimous support before stalling in the Senate.

The California Off-Road Recreation Conservation Act has the support of San Bernardino County and Inyo County; the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; local cities; virtually every major off-road vehicle group; environmental groups, such as the California Wilderness Coalition, and the Pew Charitable Trusts; local chambers of commerce; and Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Reservation.

There is no known opposition to this bill. H.R. 857 is the product of years of grassroots work and represents a consensus on how to manage our public lands in the California desert.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly encourage my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 857, introduced by Representative COOK from California, is a comprehensive package of land designations designed to increase conservation efforts and recreation access throughout the California desert.

The bill adds approximately 329,370 acres to the National Wilderness Preservation System, expands three units of the National Park System, creates new areas set aside for off-highway recreation, and establishes the Alabama Hills National Scenic Area.

Representative COOK's bill builds upon the success of the California Desert Protection Act and the recent monument designations by President Obama to provide lasting protections and ensure ongoing recreational access throughout the region.

□ 1615

This bill closely mirrors its Senate companion introduced by Senator FEINSTEIN that is moving its way through the legislative process in the Senate. Hopefully, that means we can deliver a version of this bill to the President's desk to provide a lasting conservation solution for a substantial portion of the California desert.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I insert into the RECORD background material for this particular bill.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR H.R. 857, THE CALIFORNIA OFF-ROAD RECREATION AND CONSERVATION ACT

President Clinton signed into law the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 (Public Law 103–433), which established the Mojave National Preserve, the Death Valley National Park and Joshua Tree National Park. It also created over 7 million acres of wilderness in the California desert, which stretches across millions of acres of the southeastern corner of the State. Since then, there have been numerous legislative efforts to apply additional federal land protections in this area, including the designation of additional wilderness, national monuments, and expansion of existing National Parks. In the 114th Congress, Senator Dianne Feinstein (D–CA) introduced S. 414, the California Desert Conservation and Recreation Act of 2015, a bill that amends and updates the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 and reflects similar bills introduced in previous Congresses. S. 414 would have created two new national monuments, designated approximately 349,000 acres as wilderness, and expanded Death Valley National Park, Joshua Tree National Park and the Mojave National Preserve.

Rather than pursue the legislative process, Senator Feinstein asked the Obama Administration in August 2015 to use its authority under the Antiquities Act of 1906 (54 U.S.C. 320301 et seq.) to unilaterally designate three national monuments in the California desert—the Mojave Trails National Monument, Sand to Snow National Monument, and Castle Mountains National Monument—without Congressional approval. The following October, Senator Feinstein, the Department of the Interior, and Department of Agriculture hosted one public meeting on the prospect of designating these areas as national monuments, as well as other management priorities for the California desert area.

In response to concerns raised regarding this monument strategy, Congressman Paul Cook worked with local communities and stakeholders to craft alternative legislation which attempted to balance the environmental protection of the desert's landscapes with recreational and other multiple-use activities that have occurred in the region for decades. The result was H.R. 3668, the California Minerals, Off-Road Recreation, and Conservation Act. It was the subject of a Federal Lands Subcommittee hearing on December 9, 2015, but no further legislative action was taken in the 114th Congress. On February 12, 2016, President Obama designated three new national monuments encompassing nearly 1.75 million acres in the Southern California desert.

H.R. 857 seeks to balance many of the environmental and recreationalist concerns that have remained in the wake of the Obama designations. The bill creates the first system of Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) recreation in the nation by setting aside nearly 150,000 acres across six areas to enhance and protect OHV activity. The bill also releases approximately 121,000 acres of Wilderness Study Areas, allowing for broader management of such lands. Additionally, as part of a compromise between OHV and environmental groups, H.R. 857 designates approximately 330,000 acres of new wilderness, creates a new National Scenic Area, and establishes 77 miles of new Wild and Scenic Rivers. Much of the wilderness designated under the bill is contained within a National Park or a Wilderness Study Area.

The following groups support this legislation: Advocates for Access to Public Lands; Alabama Hills Stewardship Group; American Motorcyclist Association; American Sand Association; Americans for Responsible Recreational Access; The City of Bishop, CA; Bishop Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau; Blue Ribbon Coalition, Inc.; California Wilderness Coalition; Eastern Sierra 4X4 Club; Friends of the Inyo; Inyo County Board of Supervisors; Inyo County Superintendent of Schools; Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce; Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Reservation; Motorcycle Industry Council; National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council; Pew Charitable Trusts; Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle Association; San Bernardino County; Specialty Equipment Market Association; Specialty Vehicle Institute of America.

SELECTED SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS AS REPORTED

Sec. 2. California Off-Road Recreation and Conservation.

Designates approximately 330,000 acres of wilderness in the California desert, 88,000 acres of which is primarily within Joshua Tree National Park and 180,000 acres of which is currently a Wilderness Study Area. This section also releases approximately 121,000 acres of Wilderness Study Areas back into multiple use, and ensures that ''cherry-stemmed'' roads within wilderness remain open to motorized access.

Adds approximately 40,000 acres to the National Park System. Approximately 35,000 acres of land would be added to Death Valley National Park, 25 acres would be added to Mojave National Preserve, and approximately 4,500 acres would be added to Joshua Tree National Park.

Designates six existing administrative off-highway vehicle areas as ''National Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Areas,'' creating the first system of national OHV Recreation Areas in the nation. These include Dumont Dunes, El Mirage, Rasor, Spangler Hills, Stoddard Valley, and Johnson Valley (a total of more than 150,000 acres dedicated to OHV recreation), and designates an additional 51,980 acres of previously disturbed land for study and potential inclusion into the System.

Designates 18,610 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land as the ''Alabama Hills National Scenic Area'' and includes the area in the National Landscape Conservation System.

Takes 132 acres of federal land into trust for the Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe and prohibits gaming on the land.

Ensures access to areas designated under the Act by tribes for traditional cultural and religious purposes, including the ability of a tribe to request the Secretary of the Interior to temporarily close any designated area to protect the privacy of traditional cultural and religious activities by members of a tribe or Indian religious community.

Requires the development and implementation of a tribal cultural resources management plan to identify, protect, and conserve

cultural resources of Indian tribes associated with the Xam Kwatchan Trail network.

Establishes a California-Nevada Desert Tortoise Relocation Center with the aid of private partners and directs the Secretary of the Interior to study wildlife corridors and species migration in the California desert.

Sec. 3. Visitor Center.

Authorizes the National Park Service to acquire up to five acres of land for a Joshua Tree National Park Visitor Center.

Sec. 4. California State School Land.

Allows BLM revenue from surplus land exchange and disposal to fund the purchase of California State school trust land.

Sec. 5. Designation of Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Designates 77 miles of new wild, scenic, and recreational rivers under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.). The designations affect the Amargosa River, Surprise Canyon Creek, Deep Creek, and the Whitewater River.

Sec. 6. Conforming Amendments.

Makes conforming amendments and prevents the creation of buffer zones around new wilderness areas.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, let me just say very quickly here that what Representative COOK has done is taking an important issue and doing it the right way, by collaboration and outreach with local people who live in those areas on what they want to do with the public land.

Public land does not necessarily only mean Federal land. Public land can also be State, it can be county, and it can be all sorts of entities' land, but the value of that land, whether it is Federal or State or county or municipality, is does it help the people of that particular area.

What Mr. COOK has done in this particular piece of legislation is talk to them and find a way in which the land can actually be used to help people. So, yes, he released some wilderness study areas that were designated as unsuitable for a wilderness designation but then created three times that number of acreage in new wilderness designations as well as new wild and scenic river designations.

Most importantly, because land is needed for recreational purposes, he puts protections for people who are using this land—OHV users, especially—that ensure these areas will not be closed administratively and that that kind of recreation opportunity will not be taken away on a whim.

So what he has done is worked very hard with local people to find local people's needs and desires for their local land and provided them an opportunity that will provide not only economic benefits for a few, but also recreational benefits for many, as well as creating new wilderness designations at the same time and wild and scenic designations at the same time.

This is a win-win for everyone involved. I commend him for his hard work in actually coming up with this particular process. This is the way land designation should be used.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to adopt this bill. I have no more speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 857, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LAKE BISTINEAU LAND TITLE STABILITY ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3392) to provide for stability of title to certain land in the State of Louisiana, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3392

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Lake Bistineau Land Title Stability Act''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to issue a recordable disclaimer of interest of the United States in and to—

(1) any land described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) of section 4 that is located outside the record meander lines of the Original Survey described in that subsection; and

(2) any omitted land.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) OMITTED LAND.—The term ''omitted land'' means any land in S30–T16N–R10W, including adjacent islands and the meander lines of the water body, that was in place during the Original Survey, but that was not included in the Original Survey, regardless of whether the exclusion of the land was due to gross error in the Original Survey or fraud by any individual conducting the Original Survey.

(2) ORIGINAL SURVEY.—The term ''Original Survey'' means the survey of land in northern Louisiana approved by the Surveyor General on December 8, 1842.

(3) RESURVEY.—The term ''Resurvey'' means the document entitled ''Dependent Re-Survey, Extension Survey and Survey of Two Islands, Sections 17, 29, and 30'', which was completed on November 24, 1967, approved on January 15, 1969, and published in the Federal Register on February 27, 1969 (34 Fed. Reg. 2677).

(4) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 4. MEANDER LINES; RECORDABLE DISCLAIMER OF INTEREST.

(a) MEANDER LINES.—The meander lines in the Original Survey are definitive for purposes of determining title to—

(1) the land in S30–T16N–R10W; and

(2) the 2 islands adjacent to the land described in paragraph (1).

(b) RECORDABLE DISCLAIMER OF INTEREST.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall prepare a recordable disclaimer of interest in which the United States conveys and disclaims any right, title, or interest of the United States in and to—

(A) any land described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) that is located outside the recorded meander lines described in that subsection; and

(B) any omitted land.

(2) FILING.—The Secretary shall record the disclaimer of interest prepared under paragraph (1) in the appropriate local office in the State of Louisiana in which real property documents are recorded.

(3) INCLUSIONS.—The disclaimer of interest filed under paragraph (2) shall include legal descriptions of the land subject to the disclaimer of interest using the lot or tract numbers included in the Resurvey.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON), who is the sponsor of this piece of legislation.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I do want to take a moment to thank Chairman BISHOP and his team for their continued support of the Lake Bistineau Land Title Stability Act. This bill rights a decades-old wrong when the Federal Government failed to notify landowners of a resurvey of over 200 acres around Lake Bistineau, located in northwest Louisiana. When the Federal Government did that, it preempted the rights of landowners who had legal ownership of the land.

It is unfathomable for many of us here today to imagine a morning where we wake up and we are told that the land our families owned for generations is no longer ours, to learn that the Federal Government has somehow staked claim to our very homes, the place where we were raised, the place where we are now raising our own families, and the land we had worked for decades, all of it just gone without so much as an opportunity to contest it.

That is what happened here. The government's failure to properly notify landowners of the new boundaries and its claim to the land for nearly 50 years is shameful. This error led to unnecessary uncertainty regarding who rightfully owns the land. We genuinely believe the answer is very clear: the property rightfully belongs to the Louisianans who have owned the lands since the days the State of Louisiana first entered the Union.

My bill provides certainty and clarity by directing the Secretary of the Interior to issue a disclaimer of interest on the disputed acres and rightfully restore land title ownership to the families that have lived and worked these

lands since the State's admittance to the Union.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this bill and support the folks in my district who have simply had their land taken from them without due process.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3392 requires the Bureau of Land Management to disclaim interest in 230 acres of land in northern Louisiana. The land at issue was originally surveyed in 1842, transferred to the Bossier Levee District in 1892, and conveyed to private owners in 1904.

However, BLM conducted a resurvey in 1967 after realizing that certain lands were omitted from previous Federal surveys. The resurvey puts more than 200 acres of land previously thought to belong to Louisiana and private interests back into Federal ownership.

Until recently, the results of this resurvey were largely ignored or forgotten, and now there are several homeowners with clouded titles and some confusion regarding the ownership of mineral rights in the area.

BLM is currently working to evaluate ownership and authorized conveyance where appropriate under the Color-of-Title Act. The Color-of-Title Act authorizes the BLM to convey public lands that have been acquired by peaceful adverse possession often caused by historical surveying anomalies, such as in this case. However, the Color-of-Title Act does not authorize the transfer of mineral rights owned by the United States, which is why this bill is necessary.

To be clear, under most circumstances, we would not support legislation to transfer Federal mineral rights without fair compensation to the American taxpayer, but this is a very unusual and special case. Over 40 years have passed since the BLM attempted to enforce Federal ownership of this land. This lack of clarity and communication is unacceptable. For that reason, I support this bill and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This particular bill is not the first time we have talked about this on the floor. It is long overdue. In fact, it is about 100 years long overdue, with only a handful of homeowners having their title for which they have bought, sold, and lived for decades questioning whether they actually have the title to it or not.

It is unfair, and it was wrong. It was wrong for BLM, and it is right for Congress to step in and try and solve this problem to bring some finality and certainty to an issue that never should have been an issue in the very first place. This harms the status quo and harms people.

That is not our position, and that is not what we should be doing. So I appreciate the minority working with us on this particular bill very well because it is an extremely important one to try and finally solve this particular issue so we don't come back again.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. JOHNSON for this particular bill that is solving a problem that should never have been there in his particular district, for his efforts on it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to adopt this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3392, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOUNTAINS TO SOUND GREENWAY NATIONAL HERITAGE ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1791) to establish the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area in the State of Washington, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1791

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Act''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSES; CONSTRUCTION.

The purposes of this Act include—

(1) to recognize the national importance of the natural and cultural legacies of the area, as demonstrated in the study entitled ''Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area Feasibility Study'' dated April 2012 and its addendum dated May 2014;

(2) to recognize the heritage of natural resource conservation in the Pacific Northwest and in the Mountains to Sound Greenway;

(3) to preserve, support, conserve, and interpret the legacies of natural resource conservation, community stewardship, and Indian tribes and nations from time immemorial, and reserved rights of Indian Tribes within the Mountains to Sound National Heritage Area;

(4) to promote heritage, cultural, and recreational tourism and to develop educational and cultural programs for visitors and the general public;

(5) to recognize and interpret important events and geographic locations representing key developments in the creation of America, particularly the settlement of the American West and the stories of diverse ethnic groups, Indian tribes, and others;

(6) to enhance a cooperative management framework to assist Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments, the private sector, and citizens residing in the Heritage Area in conserving, supporting, managing, and enhancing natural and recreational sites in the Heritage Area;

(7) to recognize and interpret the relationship between land and people, representing broad American ideals demonstrated through the integrity of existing resources within the Heritage Area; and

(8) to support working relationships between public land managers and the community by creating relevant links between the National Park Service, the Forest Service, other relevant Federal agencies, Tribal governments, State and local governments and agencies, and community stakeholders within and surrounding the Heritage Area in order to protect, enhance, and interpret cultural and natural resources within the Heritage Area.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) HERITAGE AREA.—The term ''Heritage Area'' means the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area established in this Act.

(2) LOCAL COORDINATING ENTITY.—The term ''local coordinating entity'' means the entity selected by the Secretary under section 4(d).

(3) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term ''management plan'' means the management plan for the Heritage Area required under section 5.

(4) MAP.—The term ''Map'' means the map entitled ''Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area Proposed Boundary'', numbered 584/125,484, and dated August 2014.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(6) STATE.—The term ''State'' means the State of Washington.

(7) TRIBE OR TRIBAL.—The terms ''Tribe'' or ''Tribal'' mean any federally recognized Indian tribe with cultural heritage and historic interests within the proposed Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area, including the Snoqualmie, Yakama, Tulalip, Muckleshoot and Colville Indian tribes.

SEC. 4. DESIGNATION OF THE MOUNTAINS TO SOUND GREENWAY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the State the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area.

(b) BOUNDARIES.—The Heritage Area shall consist of land located in King and Kittitas Counties in the State, as generally depicted on the map.

(c) MAP.—The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service, the United States Forest Service, and the local coordinating entity.

(d) LOCAL COORDINATING ENTITY.—The Secretary shall designate a willing local unit of government, a consortium of affected counties, Indian tribe, or a nonprofit organization to serve as the coordinating entity for the Heritage Area within 120 days of the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5. MANAGEMENT PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the local coordinating entity shall submit to the Secretary for approval a proposed management plan for the Heritage Area.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The management plan shall—

(1) incorporate an integrated and cooperative approach for the protection, enhancement, and interpretation of the natural, cultural, historic, scenic, Tribal, and recreational resources of the Heritage Area;

(2) take into consideration Federal, State, Tribal, and local plans, and treaty rights; and

(3) include—

(A) an inventory of the natural, historical, cultural, educational, scenic, and recreational resources of the Heritage Area, including an acknowledgment of the exercise of Tribal treaty rights, that relate to the national importance and themes of the Heritage Area that should be conserved and enhanced;

(B) a description of strategies and recommendations for conservation, funding, management, and development of the Heritage Area;

(C) a description of the actions that Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments, private organizations, and individuals have agreed to take to protect and interpret the natural, cultural, historical, scenic, and recreational resources of the Heritage Area;

(D) a program of implementation for the management plan by the local coordinating entity, including—

(i) performance goals and ongoing performance evaluation; and

(ii) commitments for implementation made by partners;

(E) the identification of sources of funding for carrying out the management plan;

(F) analysis and recommendations for means by which Federal, State, local, and Tribal programs may best be coordinated to carry out this section;

(G) an interpretive plan for the Heritage Area, including Tribal heritage;

(H) recommended policies and strategies for resource management, including the development of intergovernmental and interagency cooperative agreements to protect the natural, cultural, historical, scenic, and recreational resources of the Heritage Area; and

(I) a definition of the roles of the National Park Service, the Forest Service, other Federal agencies, and Tribes in the coordination of the Heritage Area and in otherwise furthering the purposes of this Act.

(c) DEADLINE.—If a proposed management plan is not submitted to the Secretary by the date that is 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the local coordinating entity shall be ineligible to receive additional funding under this Act until the date on which the Secretary receives and approves the management plan.

(d) APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL OF MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of receipt of the proposed management plan, the Secretary, in consultation with the State, affected counties, and Tribal governments, shall approve or disapprove the management plan.

(2) CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL.—In determining whether to approve the management plan, the Secretary shall consider whether—

(A) the local coordinating entity has afforded adequate opportunity, including public hearings, for public and governmental involvement in the preparation of the management plan;

(B) the resource protection and interpretation strategies contained in the management plan, if implemented, would adequately protect the natural, cultural, historical, scenic, and recreational resources of the Heritage Area;

(C) the management plan is consistent with the Secretary's trust responsibilities to Indian tribes and Tribal treaty rights within the National Heritage Area; and

(D) the management plan is supported by the appropriate State, Kittitas County, King County, and local officials, the cooperation of which is needed to ensure the effective implementation of State and local aspects of the management plan.

(3) ACTION FOLLOWING DISAPPROVAL.—If the Secretary disapproves the management plan, the Secretary shall—

(A) advise the local coordinating entity in writing of the reasons for the disapproval;

(B) make recommendations to the local coordinating entity for revisions to the management plan; and

(C) not later than 180 days after the receipt of any revised management plan from the local coordinating entity, approve or disapprove the revised management plan.

(e) AMENDMENTS.—The Secretary shall review and approve or disapprove in the same manner as the original management plan, each amendment to the management plan that makes a substantial change to the management plan, as determined by the Secretary. The local coordinating entity shall not carry out any amendment to the management plan until the date on which the Secretary has approved the amendment.

SEC. 6. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) AUTHORITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of implementing the management plan, the Secretary and Forest Service may—

(A) provide technical assistance for the implementation of the management plan; and

(B) enter into cooperative agreements with the local coordinating entity, State and local agencies, Tribes, and other interested parties to carry out this Act, including cooperation and cost sharing as appropriate to provide more cost-effective and coordinated public land management.

(2) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—The authority of the Secretary to provide technical assistance under this Act terminates on the date that is 15 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) LOCAL COORDINATING ENTITY AUTHORITIES.—For purposes of implementing the management plan, the local coordinating entity may—

(1) make grants to the State or a political subdivision of the State, Tribes, nonprofit organizations, and other persons;

(2) enter into cooperative agreements with, or provide technical assistance to, Federal agencies, the State or political subdivisions of the State, Tribes, nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties;

(3) hire and compensate staff, including individuals with expertise in natural, cultural, historical, scenic, and recreational resource protection and heritage programming;

(4) obtain money or services from any source, including any money or services that are provided under any other Federal law or program, in which case the Federal share of the cost of any activity assisted using Federal funds provided for National Heritage Areas shall not be more than 50 percent;

(5) contract for goods or services; and

(6) undertake to be a catalyst for other activities that—

(A) further the purposes of the Heritage Area; and

(B) are consistent with the management plan.

(c) LOCAL COORDINATING ENTITY DUTIES.—The local coordinating entity shall—

(1) in accordance with section 5, prepare and submit a management plan to the Secretary;

(2) assist units of Federal, State, and local government, Tribes, regional planning organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties in carrying out the approved management plan by—

(A) carrying out programs and projects that recognize, protect, and enhance important resource values in the Heritage Area;

(B) establishing and maintaining interpretive exhibits and programs in the Heritage Area;

(C) developing recreational and educational opportunities in the Heritage Area; and

(D) increasing public awareness of, and appreciation for, the natural, cultural, historical, Tribal, scenic, and recreational resources of the Heritage Area;

(3) consider the interests of diverse units of government, Tribes, business, organizations, and individuals in the Heritage Area in the preparation and implementation of the management plan;

(4) conduct meetings open to the public at least semiannually regarding the development and implementation of the management plan;

(5) encourage, by appropriate means, economic viability that is consistent with the Heritage Area; and

(6) submit a report to the Secretary every five years after the Secretary has approved the management plan, specifying—

(A) the expenses and income of the local coordinating entity; and

(B) significant grants or contracts made by the local coordinating entity to any other entity over the 5-year period that describes the activities, expenses, and income of the local coordinating entity (including grants from the local coordinating entity to any other entity during the year that the report is made).

(d) PROHIBITION ON ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY.—The local coordinating entity may not acquire real property or interest in real property through condemnation or with Federal funds provided for National Heritage Areas.

(e) USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS.—Nothing in this Act shall preclude the local coordinating entity from using Federal funds available under other laws for the purposes for which those funds were authorized.

SEC. 7. RELATIONSHIP TO TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.

Nothing in this Act shall construe, define, waive, limit, or affect any rights of any federally recognized Indian tribe and the Federal trust responsibility.

SEC. 8. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act affects the authority of a Federal agency to provide technical or financial assistance under any other law.

(b) CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION.—Any Federal agency planning to conduct activities that may have an impact on the Heritage Area is encouraged to consult and coordinate the activities with the local coordinating entity to the maximum extent practicable.

(c) OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Nothing in this Act—

(1) modifies, alters, or amends any law or regulation authorizing a Federal agency to manage Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Federal agency;

(2) limits the discretion of a Federal land manager to implement an approved land use plan within the boundaries of the Heritage Area; or

(3) modifies, alters, or amends any authorized use of Federal land under the jurisdiction of a Federal agency.

SEC. 9. PRIVATE PROPERTY AND REGULATORY PROTECTIONS.

Nothing in this Act, the proposed Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area, or resulting management plan (or any revisions to that plan) shall—

(1) abridge the rights of any owner of public or private property, including the right to refrain from participating in any plan,

project, program, or activity conducted within the Heritage Area;

(2) require any property owner—

(A) to allow public access (including access by Federal, State, or local agencies) to the property of the property owner; or

(B) to modify public access or use of property of the property owner under any other Federal, State, or local law;

(3) alter any duly adopted land use regulation, approved land use plan, or other regulatory authority of any Federal, State, Tribal, or local agency;

(4) convey any land use or other regulatory authority to the local coordinating entity or any subsidiary organization, including but not necessarily limited to development and management of energy or water or water-related infrastructure;

(5) authorize or imply the reservation or appropriation of water or water rights;

(6) diminish the authority of the State or Tribe to manage fish and wildlife, including the regulation of fishing, hunting, or gathering within the Heritage Area or the authority of Tribes to regulate their members with respect to such matters in the exercise of Tribal treaty rights;

(7) create any liability, or affects any liability under any other law, of any private property owner with respect to any person injured on the private property;

(8) affect current or future grazing permits, leases, or allotment on Federal lands;

(9) affect the construction, operation, maintenance or expansion of current or future water projects, including water storage, hydroelectric facilities, or delivery systems; or

(10) alter the authority of State, county, or local governments in land use planning or obligate those governments to comply with any recommendations in the management plan.

SEC. 10. EVALUATION AND REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 15 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(1) conduct an evaluation of the accomplishments of the Heritage Area; and

(2) prepare a report in accordance with subsection (c).

(b) EVALUATION.—An evaluation conducted under subsection (a)(1) shall—

(1) assess the progress of the local coordinating entity with respect to—

(A) accomplishing the purposes of the Heritage Area; and

(B) achieving the goals and objectives of the management plan;

(2) analyze the investments of Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and private entities in the Heritage Area to determine the impact of the investments; and

(3) review the management structure, partnership relationships, and funding of the Heritage Area for purposes of identifying the critical components for sustainability of the Heritage Area.

(c) REPORT.—Based on the evaluation conducted under subsection (a)(1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that includes recommendations for the future role of the National Park Service with respect to the Heritage Area.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. REICHERT), who is the sponsor of this piece of legislation, who is establishing a heritage area, and who is doing it the right way.

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman, the ranking member, and the entire committee, for that matter, for their support of this legislation that is so critical and important for the State of Washington, especially those people who live in the Eighth District of Washington State.

I am especially thankful for Mr. BISHOP's cooperation and for his advice on language to be added to the bill to make it that much better, especially as it relates to protecting the property rights of individuals within the designated heritage area.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to speak today in support of H.R. 1791, the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Act. This is a bipartisan bill that—it may have been stated—was favorably reported out of the House Natural Resources Committee earlier this month. This legislation will designate the Mountains to Sound Greenway in Washington State as a national heritage area.

This greenway spans 1.5 million acres, tracing along Interstate 90, which crosses the country. It crosses the crest of the Cascade Mountains to Ellensburg, Washington, which is in the central part of the State. It is a spectacular landscape that encompasses a vibrant mix of small towns, working farms, lush forests, and rugged mountains, alongside one of the largest and fastest growing metropolitan areas in the county—and in the State, for that matter.

Efforts to protect this area and its amazing views have made this a popular local, national, and international tourist destination where people go to hunt, fish, camp, hike, and bike. Using collaboration, negotiation, and compromise, the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust and its public-private membership have maintained a vibrant and diverse economy, while conserving the environment and protecting private property rights.

In considering the future of the greenway, the trust conducted extensive public meetings. There were 145 meetings held, with comments from over 1,000 individuals. In those discussions, the conclusion was reached that the greenway was a special place deserving of national recognition. My bill does just that by designating the greenway as a national heritage area.

National recognition of this landscape's unique historical and natural value will promote coordination, encourage local engagement, and draw visitors to small towns, supporting economic growth.

Based on the feedback we have received over the years, I have strengthened my legislation to include important protections needed to protect individual rights, property rights of private owners and Tribal communities. We are also concerned about their rights. They were also involved in this process in protecting their rights of their Indian Nation.

This is what my bill does not do:

It does not force private property owners to participate in any activity or provide public access;

It does not affect land use planning;

It does not alter, modify, or extinguish treaty rights, affect water rights, or limit the authority of the State to manage fish and wildlife, including hunting and fishing regulations.

The result is a balanced bill that enjoys broad public support. I am proud to say the support continues to grow. Over 6,000, and counting, elected officials, agencies, businesses, and organizations support the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area.

I would like to thank my colleague from Washington State (Mr. SMITH), whom I have worked with over the years to get this bill to where it is today, and it has been years.

I would also like to thank former Senator Slade Gorton, Council member Reagan Dunn, and the Mountains to Sound Greenway Coalition, who have been longtime supporters of the greenway, for their tireless efforts to make this a reality.

In addition, I thank, again, Chairman BISHOP, Ranking Member GRIJALVA, and their committee staff for their help in bringing this important piece of legislation through the committee and to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to support this bill. I urge my colleagues to support its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH).

□ 1630

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise in support of the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area designation.

This is a project that has been completely collaborative throughout the region. I think it is a great example of how to get things done. It was various government officials working with the private sector, all with the same goal, and that is to preserve open spaces in the Puget Sound area.

This is a very difficult thing to do. We are growing rapidly, businesses are

popping up all over the place, and that is great. But the other thing about the Pacific Northwest that everybody loves is the ability to get outdoors and fish, hunt, hike, and basically enjoy the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. This group came together to make sure that we can preserve that, even in the face of such massive growth.

It wasn't done by government fiat. It was done by working together with private landowners, tribes, and all of the interested stakeholders to say: ''We have a mutual interest in preserving open spaces for the better enjoyment of all of us in our community,'' and that is how the Mountains to Sound Greenway was born.

This is an incredibly successful collaborative effort. I am pleased to have the Federal Government put its stamp on it as a national heritage area. It definitely deserves that. It will help the process moving forward as they continue to make sure that they preserve these open spaces for the enjoyment of all people in the Puget Sound region.

I also want to particularly thank Congressman REICHERT for his leadership on this issue. He has been working on it for a number of years, and it has been a true bipartisan effort. People ask me all the time, basically: ''Don't you guys work together on anything?'' referring to Democrats and Republicans in general, not to DAVE and me specifically.

I have been pleased to work with DAVE for, I guess, 14 years now that he has been in Congress—I worked with him before when he was the King County sheriff—and it has been a great working relationship. Whenever people ask me that question, I am very pleased to know that, right next door, I have got Congressman REICHERT. I say: Well, DAVE and I work on a whole bunch of different things. We have over the years, and this is certainly one of the most important in his final year in Congress. I think it is very appropriate that we get this to the finish line, pass it into law, and get it signed by the President.

Again, this is a fine example of what we can do when we work together with all interested parties coming together for a mutual benefit. Maintaining open spaces in the Puget Sound region is incredibly important. It is not easy. This project is a reflection of how you can get that done, and I am pleased to support this legislation.

Again, I want to thank Congressman REICHERT for his leadership and partnership. It was great working together with him on this and other issues in the interest of our community in the Puget Sound region.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is often the situation where heritage areas that were originally established to try to allow local people to have some mechanism in which they can get together to actually advertise their particular area are usually for tourism interests or historical preservation interests. It kind of devolved, unfortunately, through time, to an issue in which people simply found a way of using the Federal Government as the deep pocket to keep getting more money all the time back to those particular areas, even though it was supposed to be a one-time situation. Then we found that other heritage areas found a way in which special interest groups got control of these areas and were starting to dictate to local government entities.

Each of those problems that have been a significant problem in other heritage areas was eliminated by Mr. REICHERT in his particular piece of legislation. That is why I said he did it the right way, with the right instincts, with the right purposes, the right illustration, especially with the emphasis on protecting private property rights and Native American rights.

So this is one of the few heritage areas that I am happy to support, because it is organized the proper way to solve problems, not just try to find a cheap and easy way to get more money back into the area. So he is commended for his integrity and the way he has orchestrated that.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of this piece of legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1791, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ADVANCING CONSERVATION AND EDUCATION ACT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4257) to maximize land management efficiencies, promote land conservation, generate education funding, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4257

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Advancing Conservation and Education Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) at statehood, Congress granted each of the western States land to be held in trust by the States and used for the support of public schools and other public institutions;

(2) since the statehood land grants, Congress and the executive branch have created multiple Federal conservation areas on Federal land within the western States, including National Parks, National Monuments, national conservation areas, national grassland, components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, wilderness study areas, and national wildlife refuges;

(3) since statehood land grant land owned by the western States are typically scattered across the public land, creation of Federal conservation areas often include State land grant parcels with substantially different management mandates, making land and resource management more difficult, expensive, and controversial for both Federal land managers and the western States; and

(4) allowing the western States to relinquish State trust land within Federal conservation areas and to select replacement land from the public land within the respective western States, would—

(A) enhance management of Federal conservation areas by allowing unified management of those areas; and

(B) increase revenue from the statehood land grants for the support of public schools and other worthy public purposes.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPLICATION.—The term ''application'' means an application for State relinquishment and selection of land made under this Act in accordance with section 5.

(2) ELIGIBLE AREA.—The term ''eligible area'' means land within the outer boundary of—

(A) a unit of the National Park System;

(B) a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System;

(C) a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System;

(D) a unit of the National Landscape Conservation System;

(E) an area determined by the Bureau of Land Management, through an inventory carried out in accordance with FLPMA, to have wilderness characteristics—

(i) as of the date of enactment of this Act; or

(ii) in a land use plan finalized under FLPMA;

(F) National Forest System land and public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management that has been designated as a national monument, national volcanic monument, national recreation area, national scenic area, inventoried roadless area, unit of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, wilderness study area, or Land Use Designation II (as described by section 508 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Public Law 101–626; 104 Stat. 4428)); or

(G) a sentinel landscape designated by the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) FLPMA.—The term ''FLPMA'' means the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(4) PRIORITY AREA.—The term ''priority area'' means land within the outer boundary of any—

(A) National Monument;

(B) national conservation area managed by the Bureau of Land Management;

(C) component of the National Wilderness Preservation System; or

(D) unit of the National Park System.

(5) PUBLIC LAND.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''public land'' has the meaning given the term ''public lands'' in section 103 of FLPMA (43 U.S.C. 1702).

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ''public land'' does not include Federal land that—

(i) is within an eligible area;

(ii) is within an area of critical environmental concern established pursuant to section 202(c)(3) of FLPMA (43 U.S.C. 1712(c)(3));

(iii) is within an area withdrawn or reserved by an Act of Congress, the President, or public

land order for a particular public purpose or program, including for the conservation of natural resources;

(iv) has been acquired using funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund established under section 200302 of title 54, United States Code;

(v) is within the boundary of an Indian reservation, pueblo, or rancheria; or

(vi) is within a special recreation management area.

(6) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(7) STATE LAND GRANT PARCEL.—The term ''State land grant parcel'' means—

(A) any land granted to a western State by Congress through a statehood or territorial land grant for the support of public education or other public institutions, or subsequently acquired by the western State for that purpose; or

(B) land granted to the State of Alaska under subsections (a), (b), and (k) of section 6 of the Act of July 7, 1958 (commonly known as the ''Alaska Statehood Act'') (48 U.S.C. note prec. 21; Public Law 85–508).

(8) TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTY.—The term ''traditional cultural property'' has the meaning given the term—

(A) ''historic property'' in section 800.16 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act); or

(B) ''sacred site'' in section 1(b) of Executive Order 13007 (42 U.S.C. 1996 note; relating to Indian sacred sites).

(9) WATER RIGHT.—The term ''water right'' means any right in or to groundwater, surface water, or effluent under Federal, State, or other law.

(10) WESTERN STATE.—The term ''western State'' means any of the States of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

SEC. 4. RELINQUISHMENT OF STATE LAND GRANT PARCELS AND SELECTION OF REPLACEMENT LAND.

(a) AUTHORITY TO SELECT.—In accordance with this Act and in order to facilitate the fulfillment of the mandates of State land grant parcels and Federal land described in subparagraphs (A) through (G) of section 3(2), on approval by the Secretary of an application under section 5, a western State may relinquish to the United States State land grant parcels wholly or primarily within eligible areas and select in exchange public land within the western State.

(b) VALID EXISTING RIGHTS.—Land conveyed under this Act shall be subject to valid existing rights.

(c) MANAGEMENT AFTER RELINQUISHMENT.—Any portion of a State land grant parcel acquired by the United States under this Act that is located within an eligible area shall—

(1) be incorporated in, and be managed as part of, the applicable unit described in subparagraphs (A) through (G) of section 3(2) in which the land is located without further action by the Secretary with jurisdiction over the unit; and

(2) if located within the National Forest System, be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture in accordance with—

(A) the Act of March 1, 1911 (commonly known as the ''Weeks Law'') (16 U.S.C. 552 et seq.); and

(B) any laws (including regulations) applicable to the National Forest System and the unit of the National Forest System in which the land is located.

(d) LIMITATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3), until a western State has relinquished and conveyed to the United States substantially all of the State land grant parcels located in priority areas in the western State, the western State may not apply to relinquish State land grant parcels in other eligible areas in the western State.

(2) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary may waive the limitation in paragraph (1) on a determination that the relinquishment and conveyance to the United States of substantially all State land grant parcels located in priority areas in the western State is impractical or infeasible.

(3) OTHER STATE LAND GRANT PARCELS.—The Secretary may accept an application from a western State to relinquish State land grant parcels within an eligible area in the western State if—

(A) the application is limited to relinquishing one or more State land grant parcels within a single eligible area;

(B) the western State submitting the application is, as determined by the Secretary, making substantial progress in relinquishing State land grant parcels within priority areas in the western State; and

(C) the Secretary has not accepted any other applications from the western State under this paragraph during the 5-year period ending on the date of the application.

SEC. 5. PROCESS.

(a) PROCESS FOR APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and in accordance with this section, the Secretary shall promulgate regulations establishing a process by which the western States may request the relinquishment of State land grant parcels wholly or partially within eligible areas and select public land in exchange for the State land grant parcels.

(2) TIMING.—Except as provided in section 8(c), the process established by the Secretary under this section shall ensure that the relinquishment of State land grant parcels and the conveyance of public land is concurrent.

(b) PUBLIC NOTICE.—Prior to accepting or conveying any land under this Act, the Secretary shall provide public notice and an opportunity to comment on the proposed conveyances between the western State and the United States.

(c) ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the Secretary shall acquire State land grant parcels and convey public land under this Act in accordance with—

(A) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and

(B) other applicable laws.

(2) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.—In preparing an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement pursuant to section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)) for the acquisition of State land grant parcels and the conveyance of public land under this Act, if the western State has indicated an unwillingness to consider State land grant parcels for relinquishment or public land for acquisition (other than the State land grant parcels and public land described in the proposed agency action), the Secretary is not required to study, develop, and describe more than—

(A) the proposed agency action; and

(B) the alternative of no action.

(d) AGREEMENTS WITH STATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized to enter into agreements with any of the western States to facilitate processing of applications and conveyance of selected land.

(2) AGREEMENT.—On completion of a preapplication process that includes identification of land to be conveyed, the Secretary and the western State may enter into a nonbinding agreement that includes—

(A) a time schedule for completing the conveyances;

(B) an assignment of responsibility for performance of required functions and for costs associated with processing the conveyances; and

(C) a statement specifying whether assumption of costs will be allowed pursuant to section 8(d).

(e) APPROVAL OR REJECTION.—The Secretary—

(1) shall issue a final determination on an application not later than 3 years after the date a western State submits that application to the Secretary;

(2) may approve an application in whole or in part, or as modified by the Secretary as necessary to balance the equities of the States and interest of the public;

(3) shall not accept an application under this Act for selection of any parcel of public land that in the judgment of the Secretary—

(A) is not reasonably compact and consolidated;

(B) will create significant management conflicts with respect to the management of adjacent Federal land;

(C) will significantly adversely affect public use of a recreation site or recreation area eligible for the collection of recreation fees under the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801 et seq.) or other authority;

(D) will significantly adversely affect public access, hunting, fishing, recreational shooting, outdoor recreation, or result in adverse impacts to critical fish and wildlife habitat; or

(E) is not in the public interest, as determined under 43 Code of Federal Regulations 2200.0-6(b), as in effect on the date of enactment of this Act;

(4) shall not accept any State land grant parcels that, in the judgment of the Secretary, are not suitable for inclusion in the applicable unit described in subparagraphs (A) through (G) of section 3(2) in which the land is located;

(5) shall, prior to approving an application, consult with the head of any Federal agency with jurisdiction over Federal land—

(A) within which a western State proposes to relinquish a State land grant parcel; or

(B) that is adjacent to public land proposed for conveyance to a western State;

(6) shall, prior to approving an application—

(A) consult, in accordance with Federal law, with any Indian tribe affected by the subject of the application, including any Indian tribe that notifies the Secretary that there is traditional cultural property located within the public land proposed for conveyance to the western State; and

(B) if the Secretary determines that traditional cultural property is located within the public land proposed for conveyance to the western State, consider the extent to which protection would be available for the traditional cultural property after conveyance of the public land to the western State, including terms or conditions that the Secretary, with the agreement of the western State, may impose on the conveyance of the public land to the western State;

(7) may reject an application in whole or in part if the Secretary, after consideration of available protection for traditional cultural property located within the public land proposed for conveyance to the western State pursuant to paragraph (6)(B), determines that insufficient protection would be available for the traditional cultural property after conveyance of the public land to the western State;

(8) shall, for applications by a western State for the conveyance of a parcel of public land that will result in significantly diminished public access to adjacent Federal land—

(A) reject that portion of the application; or

(B) reserve a right-of-way through the public land to be conveyed ensuring continued public access to adjacent Federal land; and

(9) shall convey any public land approved for selection not later than 1 year after entering into a final agreement between the Secretary and the western State on the land to be conveyed, subject to such other terms and conditions as may be appropriate.

(f) COSTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—All costs of conveyances under this Act, including appraisals, surveys, and related costs, shall be paid equally by the Secretary and the western State.

(2) ALLOCATION.—The Federal agency that receives State land in a conveyance under this Act shall assume the Federal share of administrative costs, including appraisals, surveys, and related costs, unless otherwise agreed to by the heads of the respective agencies.

(g) CONVEYANCE BY WESTERN STATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The conveyance of any State land grant parcel under this Act shall—

(A) be by patent or deed acceptable to the Secretary; and

(B) not be considered an exchange or acquisition for purposes of sections 205 and 206 of FLPMA (43 U.S.C. 1715, 1716).

(2) CONCURRENCE.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall concur in any determination to accept the conveyance of a State land grant parcel within the boundaries of any unit of the National Forest System.

(h) CONVEYANCE BY UNITED STATES.—The conveyance of public land by the United States shall—

(1) not be considered a sale, exchange, or conveyance under section 203, 206, or 209 of FLPMA (43 U.S.C. 1713, 1716, and 1719); and

(2) include such terms or conditions as the Secretary may require.

SEC. 6. MINERAL LAND.

(a) SELECTION AND CONVEYANCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to this Act, a western State may select, and the Secretary may convey, land that is mineral in character under this Act.

(2) EXCLUSION.—A western State may not select, and the Secretary may not convey land that includes only—

(A) a portion of a mineral lease or permit;

(B) the Federal mineral estate, unless the United States does not own the associated surface estate; or

(C) the Federal surface estate, unless the United States does not own the associated mineral estate.

(b) MINING CLAIMS.—

(1) MINING CLAIMS UNAFFECTED.—Nothing in this Act alters, diminishes, or expands the existing rights of a mining claimant under applicable law.

(2) VALIDITY EXAMS.—Nothing in this Act requires the United States to carry out a mineral examination for any mining claim located on public land to be conveyed under this Act.

(3) WITHDRAWAL.—Public land selected by a western State for acquisition under this Act is withdrawn, subject to valid existing rights, from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws until that date on which—

(A) the land is conveyed by the Federal Government to the western State;

(B) the Secretary makes a final determination not accepting the selection of the land; or

(C) the western State withdraws the selection of the land.

SEC. 7. CONSTRUCTION WITH OTHER LAWS.

(a) CONSIDERATION.—In the application of laws, regulations, and policies relating to selections made under this Act, the Secretary shall consider the equities of the western States and the interest of the public.

(b) LAND USE PLAN.—The Secretary may approve an application submitted in accordance with this Act even if—

(1) the selected public land is not otherwise identified for disposal; or

(2) the land to be acquired is not identified to be acquired in the applicable land use plan.

SEC. 8. VALUATION.

(a) EQUAL VALUE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The overall value of the State land grant parcels and the public land to be conveyed shall be—

(A) equal; or

(B) if the value is not equal—

(i) equalized by the payment of funds to the western State or to the Secretary as the circumstances require; or

(ii) reflected on the balance of a ledger account established under subsection (c).

(2) APPRAISAL REQUIRED.—Except as provided in subsection (b), the Secretary shall determine the value of a State land grant parcel and public land through an appraisal completed in accordance with—

(A) the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions; and

(B) the Uniform Standards for Professional Appraisal Practice.

(3) EQUALIZATION.—For each transaction, an equalization payment described in paragraph (1)(B)(i) or a ledger entry described in paragraph (1)(B)(ii) may not exceed 25 percent of the total value of the land or interest transferred out of Federal ownership.

(b) LOW VALUE PARCELS.—

(1) VALUATION.—The Secretary may, with the consent of a western State, use a summary appraisal or statement of value made by a qualified appraiser carried out in accordance with the Uniform Standards for Professional Appraisal Practice instead of an appraisal that complies with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions if the western State and the Secretary agree that the market value of a State land grant parcel or a parcel of public land is—

(A) less than $500,000; and

(B) less than $500 per acre.

(2) DIVISION.—A State land grant parcel or a parcel of public land may not be artificially divided in order to qualify for a summary appraisal or statement of value under paragraph (1).

(c) LEDGER ACCOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary and any western State may agree to use a ledger account to make equal the value of land relinquished by the western State and conveyed by the United States to the western State under this Act.

(2) IMBALANCES.—A ledger account described in paragraph (1) shall reflect imbalances in value to be reconciled in a subsequent transaction.

(3) ACCOUNT BALANCING.—Each ledger account shall be—

(A) balanced not later than 3 years after the date on which the ledger account is established; and

(B) closed not later than 5 years after the date of the last conveyance of land under this Act.

(d) COSTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary or the western State may assume costs or other responsibilities or requirements for conveying land under this Act that ordinarily are borne by the other party.

(2) ADJUSTMENT.—If the Secretary assumes costs or other responsibilities under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall make adjustments to the value of the public land conveyed to the western State to compensate the Secretary for assuming the costs or other responsibilities.

(e) ADJUSTMENT.—If value is attributed to any parcel of public land that has been selected by a western State because of the presence of minerals under a lease entered into under the Mineral Leasing Act (30 U.S.C. 181 et seq.) that is in a producing or producible status, and the lease is to be conveyed under this Act, the value of the parcel shall be reduced by the amount that represents the likely Federal revenue sharing obligation under that Act, but the adjustment shall not be considered as reflecting a property right of the western State.

SEC. 9. MISCELLANEOUS.

(a) HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary and the western States shall make available for review and inspection any record relating to hazardous materials on land to be conveyed under this Act.

(2) CERTIFICATION.—The Secretary and the western State shall each complete an inspection and a hazardous materials certification of land to be conveyed under this Act before the completion of the conveyance.

(b) WATER RIGHTS.—

(1) STATE-HELD APPURTENANT WATER RIGHTS.—Any conveyance of a State land grant parcel under this Act may include the conveyance of State-held water rights appurtenant to the land conveyed in accordance with applicable law.

(2) FEDERALLY HELD APPURTENANT WATER RIGHTS.—Any conveyance of public land under this Act may include the conveyance of federally held water rights appurtenant to the land conveyed in accordance with applicable Federal and State law.

(3) EFFECT.—Nothing in this Act—

(A) creates an implied or expressed Federal reserved water right;

(B) affects a valid existing water right; or

(C) affects the use of water conveyance infrastructure associated with a water right described in subparagraph (B).

(c) GRAZING PERMITS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If land conveyed under this Act is subject to a lease, permit, or contract for the grazing of domestic livestock in effect on the date of the conveyance, the Secretary (or the Secretary of Agriculture for land located within the National Forest System) and the western State shall allow the grazing to continue for the remainder of the term of the lease, permit, or contract, subject to the related terms and conditions of user agreements, including permitted stocking rates, grazing fee levels, access, and ownership and use of range improvements.

(2) RENEWAL.—On expiration of any grazing lease, permit, or contract described in paragraph (1), the party that has jurisdiction over the land on the date of expiration may elect to renew the lease, permit, or contract if permitted under applicable law.

(3) CANCELLATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act prevents the Secretary (or the Secretary of Agriculture for land located within the National Forest System) or the western State from canceling or modifying a grazing permit, lease, or contract if the land subject to the permit, lease, or contract is sold, conveyed, transferred, or leased for nongrazing purposes.

(B) LIMITATION.—Except to the extent reasonably necessary to accommodate surface operations in support of mineral development, the Secretary (or the Secretary of Agriculture for land located within the National Forest System) or the western State shall not cancel or modify a grazing permit, lease, or contract for land conveyed pursuant to this Act because the land subject to the permit, lease, or contract has been leased for mineral development.

(4) BASE PROPERTIES.—If land conveyed by the western State under this Act is used by a grazing permittee or lessee to meet the base property requirements for a Federal grazing permit or lease, the land shall continue to qualify as a base property for the remaining term of the lease or permit and the term of any renewal or extension of the lease or permit.

(5) RANGE IMPROVEMENTS.—Nothing in this Act prohibits a holder of a grazing lease, permit, or contract from being compensated for range improvements pursuant to the terms of the lease, permit, or contract under existing Federal or State laws.

(d) ROAD RIGHTS-OF-WAYS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If land conveyed under this Act is subject to a road lease, road right-of-way, road easement, or other valid existing right in effect on the date of the conveyance, the Secretary (or the Secretary of Agriculture for land located within the National Forest System) and the western State shall allow the lease, right-of-way, easement, or other valid existing right to continue for the remainder of the term of the lease, right-of-way, easement, or other valid existing right, subject to the applicable terms and conditions of the lease, right-of-way, easement, or other valid existing right.

(2) RENEWAL.—On expiration of any road lease, road right-of-way, road easement, or other valid existing right described in paragraph (1), the party that has jurisdiction over the land on the date of expiration may elect to renew the

lease, right-of-way, easement, or other valid existing right if permitted under applicable law.

(e) PROTECTION OF INDIAN RIGHTS.—

(1) TREATY RIGHTS.—Nothing in this Act alters or diminishes the treaty rights of any Indian tribe.

(2) LAND HELD IN TRUST.—Nothing in this Act affects—

(A) land held in trust by the Secretary for any Indian tribe; or

(B) any individual Indian allotment.

(3) EFFECT.—Nothing in this Act alters, diminishes, or enlarges the application of—

(A) division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code (formerly known as the ''National Historic Preservation Act'' (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.));

(B) the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.);

(C) Public Law 95–341 (commonly known as the ''American Indian Religious Freedom Act'') (42 U.S.C. 1996);

(D) chapter 3125 of title 54, United States Code; or

(E) the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (16 U.S.C. 470aa et seq.).

SEC. 10. EFFECT.

Nothing in this Act repeals or limits, expressly or by implication, any authority in existence on the date of enactment of this Act for the selection or exchange of land.

SEC. 11. TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), the provisions of this Act shall cease to be effective with regard to any State land grant parcel located within an eligible area for which an application has not been filed by the date that is 20 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) NEW ELIGIBLE AREAS.—If the application described in subsection (a) is for a State land grant parcel that is located within an eligible area established after the date of enactment of this Act, the provisions of this Act shall remain effective for 20 years after the date on which the new eligible area is established.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. STEWART).

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, as you know—I think everyone knows this much—much of the land in the Western States is controlled by whom? The Federal Government.

In my own home State of Utah, about two-thirds of the land is owned and controlled by the Federal Government. Because States cannot tax this Federal Government land, it means that about two-thirds of the land in Utah cannot be taxed.

This, as you can imagine, presents enormous challenges for Western States when they are trying to raise sufficient funds for things like public education.

Recognizing this challenge, Congress made sizable land grants to the Western States, but it was based on the condition that granted lands be held in trust and used to generate revenue for education and other worthy causes.

Since the time State lands trust grants were made, large areas of the West have been designated for Federal protection. This has resulted in these trust lands being encapsulated inside federally protected lands, creating land management conflicts that are just enormous and very difficult to overcome.

Once again, the end result is that you have reduced revenues for our children in Utah, and we have a challenge finding sufficient revenue to educate them. It is clearly in the best interest of States and the Federal Government to transfer ownership of some of these trust lands to the Federal Government in exchange for less sensitive and revenue-generating lands transferred to the State.

This truly is bipartisan, a win-win, and not difficult to see that everyone is better off by this. Land exchanges between States and the Federal Government have become very expensive and time-consuming. That is why my bill advancing conservation and education creates a streamlined mechanism for transfer of lands between States and the Federal Government.

As I said, this bill truly is a win-win, and it proves to the people on all sides that we can come together and that we can solve some of these very complex land issues.

So, again, I want to thank my friend from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) for working with me on this important legislation. I would also like to thank the Wilderness Society, SITLA, and others who have worked to make this possible.

If you are a conservationist, if you are an educator, if you are a legislator on either side of the aisle, this is something that most of us agree is helpful and positive for the Federal Government and also for the children in Utah.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4257 creates a process to expedite land exchanges between the Federal Government and State land grant agencies.

Currently, the primary method of eliminating State trust lands from conservation areas has been through legislative land exchanges, which can be time-consuming and complicated. This bipartisan bill, introduced by Representatives STEWART and POLIS, offers a new way to speed up the process of removing State lands from Federal conservation areas.

H.R. 4257 could incentivize State land agencies to be good partners and supporters of additional conservation legislation by removing an important barrier to new conservation designations and improving the management of existing conservation areas.

Mr. Speaker, I support passage of this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD additional background that is necessary for this particular bill.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR H.R. 4257, ADVANCING CONSERVATION AND EDUCATION ACT

The Advancing Conservation and Education (ACE) Act is based on existing provisions in western State enabling acts allowing States to select replacement lands in lieu of State school grants that were not completed by the United States.

Congress granted most of the western States land to be held in trust by the States and used to support public education and other public purposes. Many of these State trust lands parcels are in a ''checkerboard'' pattern inside federal areas managed for conservation, such as national parks and monuments, national wildlife refuges, wilderness study areas, and areas of critical environmental concern. The intermingling of land ownership creates significant problems for both federal land managers and the States, since the latter are required to manage State trust lands to provide revenue for public education. Through its land use planning process, the Bureau of Land Management

(BLM) identifies lands that are difficult or uneconomic to manage, such as ''checkerboard'' areas.

H.R. 4257 will help meet the goal of rationalizing land ownership in the west by creating an additional authority for the United States to acquire State lands in federal conservation areas, and compensating the States with equal-value replacement federal lands within the State. The current process where interested parties bring land exchanges to Congress on a case-by-case basis is time-consuming and cumbersome, and existing administrative land exchange authorities are equally challenging.

The bipartisan proposal expands existing authority (43 U.S.C. 851–852), that allows western States to select federal lands ''in lieu'' of lands lost to the States when original statehood land grants were not completed. It would allow States with lands located in federal conservation areas to deed back those lands to the United States, and select replacement lands of equivalent value from the unappropriated federal public lands within that State. Many of the provisions of the proposal incorporate existing BLM administrative provisions for in-lieu selections, including land valuation, and compliance with BLM land use plans. It would not replace the land exchange process, but rather provide an alternative mechanism for State-federal land transfers.

Further, H.R. 4257 also directs the Department of the Interior to create a process for the relinquishment of the parcels and sets forth requirements regarding hazardous materials on land conveyed, water rights, grazing permits, road rights-of ways, and other valid existing rights.

The Western States Land Commissioners Association (WSLCA), a bipartisan organization of 21 State agencies responsible for managing more than 500 million acres of public and school trust land, has proposed a legislative solution to provide a mechanism for the United States to acquire lands owned by the western States and located inside federal conservation areas, while fairly compensating the States for those lands by granting them the right to select replacement lands of equivalent value from the public domain. The WSLCA proposal has had substantial

input from western States and the conservation community. Previous iterations of the proposed bill have also been supported by conservations groups such as the Wilderness Society. H.R. 4257 is based on this proposal.

H.R. 4257 would provide a useful tool for federal and State land managers to make their respective landholdings more rational, for the benefit of both sound land management and public education funding.

A companion bill, S. 2078, has been introduced in the Senate. The policy provisions set forth in H.R. 4257 have enjoyed bipartisan support in the House and Senate in the 114th and 113th sessions..

MAJOR PROVISIONS SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Sec. 4. Relinquishment of State Land Grant Parcels and Selection of Replacement Land.

Expands existing authority for western States to relinquish State trust lands wholly or primarily within eligible federal areas managed for conservation.

Clarifies that land conveyed under this authority remains subject to valid existing rights.

Stipulates that relinquished lands shall be managed by the land agency responsible for the conservation area that the land is being added to.

Requires western States' authority to use this alternative authority in priority areas before applying to relinquish State land in other eligible areas. However, the Secretary of the Interior can waive this requirement if it is determined that the relinquishment of parcels located in the priority areas is impractical or infeasible.

Further waives the priority requirement if an application for relinquishment is limited to a single eligible area, and it is further determined that substantial progress is being made by the State to relinquish priority parcels. This exemption can only occur once every five years.

Sec. 5. Process.

Requires the Secretary of the Interior to establish a process within 540 days for western States to request relinquishment of eligible State parcels and to select federal land in exchange.

Requires the land exchanges to be concurrent.

Requires public notice and an opportunity to comment on proposed conveyances between the western State and the United States.

Requires the land exchanges to be done in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and other applicable laws.

Permits the Secretary to enter into agreements with any of the western States to facilitate processing of applications and conveyance of land.

Requires the Secretary to issue a final determination on an application within 3 years after submission.

Prohibits the Secretary from accepting an application for the selection of federal land if it is determined that the selection is not reasonably compact and consolidated, if it will create significant management conflicts, if it will adversely affect federal use or a recreation site, or if the selection is not in the public interest.

Requires consultation with the head of the appropriate federal land agency before approving any conveyance of federal land.

Requires consultation with any Indian tribe affected by the land conveyance, including any tribe which notifies the Secretary that there is traditional cultural property located within the federal land proposed for conveyance to the western State.

Stipulates the costs of conveyance shall be shared equally by the Secretary and the western State.

Sec. 6. Mineral Land.

Permits western States to select federal land that is mineral in character.

Excludes mineral land that only includes a portion of a mineral lease or permit, land that is part of the federal mineral estate (unless the United States does not own the associated surface estate), or land that is part of federal surface estate (unless the United States does not own the associated mineral estate).

Clarifies that nothing in this Act shall affect existing mining claims.

Sec. 7. Construction with Other Laws.

Requires the Secretary to consider the equities of the western States and interest of the public in the application of this Act.

Sec. 8. Valuation.

Requires the overall value of the State trust parcels and the federal land conveyed to be equal, and if not equal to be equalized by a payment of funds.

Sec. 9. Miscellaneous.

Requires the Secretary and the western State make available for review any record relating to hazardous materials on the land to be conveyed.

Allows State or federal water rights to be included in the conveyance of land.

Clarifies that nothing in this Act creates an implied or expressed federal reserved water right, affects a valid existing water right, or affects the use of water conveyance infrastructure.

Stipulates that existing grazing rights must be honored for the remainder of the term of lease, permit, or contract. After this duration, the party who has jurisdiction over the land may elect to renew the lease, permit or contract.

Clarifies that nothing in this Act prevents the Secretary or State from cancelling or modifying a grazing permit, lease or contract if the land is sold, conveyed, transferred or leased for nongrazing purposes.

Restricts cancellation of grazing permits except to the extent reasonably necessary to accommodate surface operations in support of mineral development.

Stipulates that existing road lease, road right-of-way, road easement, or other valid existing right must be honored for the remainder of the term of lease, permit, or contract. After this duration, the party who has jurisdiction over the land may elect to renew the lease, permit or contract.

Clarifies that nothing in this Act alters or diminishes the treaty rights of any Indian tribe.

Sec. 10 Effect.

Nothing in this Act repeals or limits, expressly or by implication, any authority in existence on the date of enactment of this Act for the selection or exchange of land.

Sec. 11. Termination of Authority.

The authority provided by this Act will expire 20 years after enactment.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, let me also say that, as a former teacher and a future teacher, I appreciate Mr. STEWART actually working on this piece of legislation that goes to help education in the State of Utah. No one else is doing that.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I urge a ''yes'' vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4257, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BLUE WATER NAVY VIETNAM VETERANS ACT OF 2018

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 299) to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 299

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. CLARIFICATION OF PRESUMPTIONS OF EXPOSURE FOR VETERANS WHO SERVED IN VICINITY OF REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1116 the following new section:

''§ 1116A. Presumptions of service connection for veterans who served offshore of the Republic of Vietnam

''(a) SERVICE CONNECTION.—For the purposes of section 1110 of this title, and subject to section 1113 of this title, a disease covered by section 1116 of this title becoming manifest as specified in that section in a veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, served offshore of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, shall be considered to have been incurred in or aggravated by such service, notwithstanding that there is no record of evidence of such disease during the period of such service.

''(b) EXPOSURE.—A veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, served offshore of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, shall be presumed to have been exposed during such service to an herbicide agent unless there is affirmative evidence to establish that the veteran was not exposed to any such agent during that service.

''(c) EFFECTIVE DATE OF AWARD.—(1) Except as provided by paragraph (2), the effective date of an award under this section shall be determined in accordance with section 5110 of this title.

''(2)(A) Notwithstanding subsection (g) of section 5110 of this title, the Secretary shall determine the effective date of an award based on a claim under this section for an individual described in subparagraph (B) by treating the date on which the individual filed the prior claim specified in clause (i) of such subparagraph as the date on which the individual filed the claim so awarded under this section.

''(B) An individual described in this subparagraph is a veteran, or a survivor of a veteran, who meets the following criteria:

''(i) The veteran or survivor submitted a claim for disability compensation on or after September 25, 1985, and before January 1, 2019, for a disease covered by this section, and the claim was denied by reason of the claim not establishing that the disease was

incurred or aggravated by the service of the veteran.

''(ii) The veteran or survivor submits a claim for disability compensation on or after January 1, 2019, for the same condition covered by the prior claim under clause (i), and the claim is approved pursuant to this section.

''(d) DETERMINATION OF OFFSHORE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for purposes of this section, the Secretary shall treat a location as being offshore of Vietnam if the location is not more than 12 nautical miles seaward of a line commencing on the southwestern demarcation line of the waters of Vietnam and Cambodia and intersecting the following points:

''Points Geographic Names	Latitude North	Longitude East
At Hon Nhan Island, Tho Chu Archipelago Kien Giang Province	9°15.0'	103°27.0'
At Hon Da Island southeast of Hon Khoai Island Minh Hai Province	8°22.8'	104°52.4'
At Tai Lon Islet, Con Dao Islet in Con Dao-Vung Toa Special Sector	8°37.8'	106°37.5'
At Bong Lai Islet, Con Dao Islet	8°38.9'	106°40.3'
At Bay Canh Islet, Con Dao Islet	8°39.7'	106°42.1'
At Hon Hai Islet (Phu Qui group of islands) Thuan Hai Province	9°58.0'	109°5.0'
At Hon Doi Islet, Thuan Hai Province	12°39.0'	109°28.0'
At Dai Lanh point, Phu Khanh Province	12°53.8'	109°27.2'
At Ong Can Islet, Phu Khanh Province	13°54.0'	109°21.0'
At Ly Son Islet, Nghia Binh Province	15°23.1'	109° 9.0'
At Con Co Island, Binh Tri Thien Province	17°10.0'	107°20.6'

''(e) HERBICIDE AGENT.—In this section, the term 'herbicide agent' has the meaning given that term in section 1116 (a)(3) of this title.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1116 the following new item:

''1116A. Presumptions of service connection for veterans who served offshore of the Republic of Vietnam.''.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) GUIDANCE.—Notwithstanding section 501 of such title, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may issue guidance to implement section 1116A of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(2) UPDATES.—On a quarterly basis during the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and ending on the date on which regulations are prescribed to carry out such section 1116A, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate updates on the status of such regulations.

(3) PENDING CASES.—

(A) AUTHORITY TO STAY.—The Secretary may stay a claim described in subparagraph (B) until the date on which the Secretary commences the implementation of such section 1116A.

(B) CLAIMS DESCRIBED.—A claim described in this subparagraph is a claim for disability compensation—

(i) relating to the service and diseases covered by such section 1116A; and

(ii) that is pending at the Veterans Benefits Administration or the Board of Veterans' Appeals on or after the date of the enactment of this Act and before the date on which the Secretary commences the implementation of such section 1116A.

(d) OUTREACH.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct outreach to inform veterans described in paragraph (2) of the ability to submit a claim for disability compensation under section 1116A of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(2) VETERAN DESCRIBED.—A veteran described in this paragraph is a veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, served offshore of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975.

(e) REPORTS.—Not later than January 1, 2020, and not later than January 1, 2022, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report on claims for disability compensation under section 1116A of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a). Each report shall include the following with respect to the period covered by the report, disaggregated by the regional offices of the Department of Veterans Affairs:

(1) The number of claims filed under such section.

(2) The number of such claims granted.

(3) The number of such claims denied.

(f) HEALTH CARE.—Section 1710(e)(4) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''(including offshore of such Republic as described in section 1116A(d) of this title)'' after ''served on active duty in the Republic of Vietnam''.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on January 1, 2019.

SEC. 3. PRESUMPTION OF HERBICIDE EXPOSURE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS WHO SERVED IN KOREA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1116A, as added by section 2, the following new section:

''§ 1116B. Presumption of herbicide exposure for certain veterans who served in Korea

''(a) PRESUMPTION OF SERVICE-CONNECTION.—(1) For the purposes of section 1110 of this title, and subject to section 1113 of this title, a disease specified in subsection (b) that becomes manifest as specified in that subsection in a veteran described in paragraph (2) shall be considered to have been incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service, notwithstanding that there is no record of evidence of such disease during the period of such service.

''(2) A veteran described in this paragraph is a veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, served in or near the Korean demilitarized zone (DMZ), during the period beginning on September 1, 1967, and ending on August 31, 1971.

''(b) DISEASES.—A disease specified in this subsection is—

''(1) a disease specified in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) of section 1116 of this title that becomes manifest as specified in that paragraph; or

''(2) any additional disease that—

''(A) the Secretary determines in regulations warrants a presumption of service-connection by reason of having positive association with exposure to an herbicide agent; and

''(B) becomes manifest within any period prescribed in such regulations.

''(c) HERBICIDE AGENT.—For purposes of this section, the term 'herbicide agent' has the meaning given such term in section 1821(d) of this title.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1116A, as added by section 2, the following new item:

''1116B. Presumption of herbicide exposure for certain veterans who served in Korea.''.

(c) PENDING CASES.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO STAY.—The Secretary may stay a claim described in subparagraph (B) until the date on which the Secretary commences the implementation of section 1116B of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(2) CLAIMS DESCRIBED.—A claim described in this subparagraph is a claim for disability compensation—

(A) relating to the service and diseases covered by such section 1116B; and

(B) that is pending at the Veterans Benefits Administration or the Board of Veterans' Appeals on or after the date of the enactment of this Act and before the date on which the Secretary commences the implementation of such section 1116B.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on January 1, 2019.

SEC. 4. BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN OF CERTAIN THAILAND SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 18 of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida

''(a) BENEFITS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may provide to any child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand who is suffering from spina bifida the health care, vocational training and rehabilitation, and monetary allowance required to be paid to a child of a Vietnam veteran who is suffering from spina bifida under subchapter I of this chapter as if such child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand were a child of a Vietnam veteran who is suffering from spina bifida under such subchapter.

''(b) SPINA BIFIDA CONDITIONS COVERED.—This section applies with respect to all forms and manifestations of spina bifida, except spina bifida occulta.

''(c) VETERAN OF COVERED SERVICE IN THAILAND.—For purposes of this section, a veteran of covered service in Thailand is any individual, without regard to the characterization of that individual's service, who—

''(1) served in the active military, naval, or air service in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975; and

''(2) is determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, to have been exposed to a herbicide agent during such service in Thailand.

''(d) HERBICIDE AGENT.—For purposes of this section, the term 'herbicide agent' means a chemical in a herbicide used in support of United States and allied military operations in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF ''CHILD''.—Section 1831(1) of such title is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) by striking ''subchapter III of this chapter'' and inserting ''section 1821 of this title''; and

(B) in clause (i), by striking ''section 1821 of this title'' and inserting ''that section''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) For purposes of section 1822 of this title, an individual, regardless of age or marital status, who—

''(i) is the natural child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand (as determined for purposes of that section); and

''(ii) was conceived after the date on which that veteran first entered service described in subsection (c) of that section.''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SUBCHAPTER HEADING.—The heading for subchapter III of chapter 18 of such title is amended by inserting ''AND THAILAND'' after ''KOREA''.

(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 18 of such title is amended—

(A) by striking the item relating to subchapter III and inserting the following new item:

''SUBCHAPTER III—CHILDREN OF CERTAIN KOREA AND THAILAND SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA'';

and

(B) by inserting after the item relating to section 1821 the following new item:

''1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida.''.

(d) PENDING CASES.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO STAY.—The Secretary may stay a claim described in subparagraph (B) until the date on which the Secretary commences the implementation of section 1822 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(2) CLAIMS DESCRIBED.—A claim described in this subparagraph is a claim for benefits—

(A) relating to the spina bifida and service covered by such section 1822; and

(B) that is pending at the Veterans Benefits Administration or the Board of Veterans' Appeals on or after the date of the enactment of this Act and before the date on which the Secretary commences the implementation of such section 1822.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate a report identifying—

(1) the military installations of the United States located in Thailand during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, at which an herbicide agent (as defined in section 1822 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)) was actively used; and

(2) the period of such use.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on January 1, 2019.

SEC. 5. UPDATED REPORT ON CERTAIN GULF WAR ILLNESS STUDY.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Senate an updated report on the findings, as of the date of the updated report, of the Follow-up Study of a National Cohort of Gulf War and Gulf Era Veterans under the epidemiology program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SEC. 6. LOANS GUARANTEED UNDER HOME LOAN PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) ADJUSTMENT OF LOAN LIMIT.—Section 3703(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)(i)(IV)—

(A) by striking ''the lesser of''; and

(B) by striking ''or 25 percent of the loan''; and

(2) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''Freddie Mac'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting ''amount of the loan.''.

(b) LOAN FEES.—Section 3729(b)(2) of such title is amended by striking the loan fee table and inserting the following:

''Type of loan	Active duty veteran	Reservist	Other obligor
(A)(i) Initial loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 0-down, or any other initial loan described in section 3710(a) other than with 5-down or 10-down (closed on or after October 1, 2004, and before January 1, 2019)	2.15	2.40	NA
(A)(ii) Initial loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 0-down, or any other initial loan described in section 3710(a) other than with 5-down or 10-down (closed on or after January 1, 2019, and before December 1, 2027)	2.40	2.40	NA
(A)(iii) Initial loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 0-down, or any other initial loan described in section 3710(a) other than with 5-down or 10-down (closed on or after December 1, 2027, and before October 1, 2028)	2.15	2.15	NA
(A)(iv) Initial loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 0-down, or any other initial loan described in section 3710(a) other than with 5-down or 10-down (closed on or after October 1, 2028)	1.40	1.40	NA
(B)(i) Subsequent loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 0-down, or any other subsequent loan described in section 3710(a) (closed on or after October 1, 2004, and before January 1, 2019)	3.30	3.30	NA
(B)(ii) Subsequent loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 0-down, or any other subsequent loan described in section 3710(a) (closed on or after January 1, 2019, and before December 1, 2027)	3.80	3.80	NA
(B)(iii) Subsequent loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 0-down, or any other subsequent loan described in section 3710(a) (closed on or after December 1, 2027, and before October 1, 2028)	3.30	3.30	NA
(B)(iv) Subsequent loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 0-down, or any other subsequent loan described in section 3710(a) (closed on or after October 1, 2028)	1.25	1.25	NA
(C)(i) Loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 5-down (closed before January 1, 2019)	1.50	1.75	NA

''Type of loan	Active duty veteran	Reservist	Other obligor
(C)(ii) Loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 5-down (closed on or after January 1, 2019, and before December 1, 2027)	1.75	1.75	NA
(C)(iii) Loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 5-down (closed on or after December 1, 2027, and before October 1, 2028)	1.50	1.50	NA
(C)(iv) Loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 5-down (closed on or after October 1, 2028)	0.75	0.75	NA
(D)(i) Loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 10-down (closed before January 1, 2019)	1.25	1.50	NA
(D)(ii) Loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 10-down (closed on or after January 1, 2019, and before December 1, 2027)	1.45	1.45	NA
(D)(iii) Loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 10-down (closed on or after December 1, 2027, and before October 1, 2028)	1.25	1.25	NA
(D)(iv) Loan described in section 3710(a) to purchase or construct a dwelling with 10-down (closed on or after October 1, 2028)	0.50	0.50	NA
(E) Interest rate reduction refinancing loan	0.50	0.50	NA
(F) Direct loan under section 3711	1.00	1.00	NA
(G) Manufactured home loan under section 3712 (other than an interest rate reduction refinancing loan)	1.00	1.00	NA
(H) Loan to Native American veteran under section 3762 (other than an interest rate reduction refinancing loan)	1.25	1.25	NA
(I) Loan assumption under section 3714	0.50	0.50	0.50
(J) Loan under section 3733(a)	2.25	2.25	2.25''.

(c) WAIVER OF FEES FOR PURPLE HEART RECIPIENTS; COLLECTION OF CERTAIN LOAN FEES.—Section 3729(c) of such title is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ''A fee'' and inserting ''Subject to paragraph (3), a fee'';

(B) by striking ''or from a surviving spouse'' and inserting '', from a surviving spouse''; and

(C) by inserting before the period at the end the following: '', or from a member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who was awarded the Purple Heart''.

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) A fee shall be collected under this section from any veteran with a service-connected disability rated as less than total, any surviving spouse of such a veteran, and any member of the Armed Forces who, on or after January 1, 2019, receives a loan in an amount that exceeds the Freddie Mac conforming loan limit limitation determined under section 305(a)(2) of the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation Act (12 U.S.C. 1454(a)(2)) for a single-family residence, as adjusted for the year involved.''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to a loan guaranteed under section 3710 of title 38, United States Code, on or after January 1, 2019.

(e) GUIDANCE.—Notwithstanding section 501 of such title, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may issue guidance to implement this section before prescribing new regulations under sections 3703 and 3729 of such title, as amended by subsections (a), (b), and (c).

SEC. 7. INFORMATION GATHERING FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HOME LOAN APPRAISALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3731(b) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) The Secretary shall permit an appraiser on a list developed and maintained under subsection (a)(3) to make an appraisal for the purposes of this chapter based solely on information gathered by a person with whom the appraiser has entered into an agreement for such services.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to an appraisal under section 3731 of such title, on or after January 1, 2019.

(c) GUIDANCE.—Notwithstanding section 501 of such title, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may issue guidance to implement this section before prescribing new regulations under sections 3731 of such title, as amended by subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2018, which was introduced by Representative VALADAO of California.

H.R. 299, as amended, would finally extend the presumption of exposure to Agent Orange to blue water Navy veterans. I am grateful to Mr. VALADAO for introducing this long overdue bill, but I also thank my colleagues on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs for working with us in a bipartisan manner to find an acceptable way to pay for this bill.

As many of you know, Agent Orange was used in Vietnam to defoliate areas in the jungle where enemy forces would come and ambush our troops. Unfortunately, many Vietnam veterans have developed diseases as a result of their exposure to Agent Orange.

Currently, VA only extends a presumption of exposure to Vietnam veterans who actually set foot in Vietnam or served in the inland waterways, or the brown water Navy, we call it. Blue water Navy veterans who served offshore of Vietnam were excluded from the presumption. VA denies these benefits because it claims there is not enough scientific information to determine whether blue water Navy veterans came into contact with herbicides in amounts meaningful to cause disease.

Mr. Speaker, I have read the science, and, unfortunately, we will never be able to prove whether blue water Navy veterans were harmed by herbicides. But I have said this before and I will say it again: When too many years have passed—over four decades, in this case—to meaningfully determine the science, the presumption should be heavily in favor of the veteran.

Moreover, I am pleased that the bill would help veterans who may have been harmed by exposure to herbicides while serving areas outside the Republic of Vietnam.

H.R. 299, as amended, incorporates a proposal authored by Representative TOM MACARTHUR, which would extend the presumption to veterans who served in or near the Korean Demilitarized Zone beginning on September 1, 1967, which is the month when the military began testing herbicides in that area. The end date of the presumption period would remain the same as it is now, which is August 31, 1971.

This legislation would also require VA to identify U.S. military bases located in Thailand where Agent Orange was used and when it was used.

Additionally, this bill includes a proposal authored by Representative WESTERMAN of Arkansas, which would require VA to provide benefits for children who were born with spina bifida if one or both parents may have been exposed to Agent Orange while serving in Thailand, just as VA does for children with spina bifida if their parents served in Vietnam or the Korean DMZ while Agent Orange was used.

The manager's amendment makes some technical changes to ensure that

all Vietnam naval veterans who served within 12 miles offshore of Vietnam during the war are eligible for the presumption. The manager's amendment also makes technical changes to clarify the intent of this bill, including ensuring surviving spouses are eligible for retroactive benefits and authorizes VA to start paying benefits before the final regulations are issued.

Additionally, H.R. 299, as amended, would include several improvements to the VA's home loan program, introduced by several Members, including changes to VA's home appraisal system, which was introduced by Representative ARRINGTON; and expansion of the conforming loan limit, which would allow veterans to use their earned VA loan benefits in more expensive areas, if they qualify. This provision was introduced by Representative ZELDIN.

□ 1645

Extension of the waiver of home loan funding fees to recipients of the Purple Heart who are still serving on Active Duty was introduced by Representative HERRERA BEUTLER, and temporary increases to VA's home loan funding fees for nondisabled veterans, to offset the cost of this bill.

I want to thank all of our VSO partners for their support and for helping us craft a bill that finally addresses the plight of blue water Navy veterans. Specifically, I want to thank the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, the Disabled American Veterans, the American Legion, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Fleet Reserve Association, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Blue Water Vietnam Veteran Association, Military Veterans Advocacy, and the Military Officers Association of America.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 299, as amended, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 299, as amended, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act. It has taken years of dedicated advocacy and bipartisanship to get us here today. I would especially like to recognize Ranking Member WALZ, who could not be here today but was a driving force behind this legislation.

H.R. 299 is an important step toward rectifying a longstanding injustice for veterans who were made sick from exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam more than 50 years ago.

Passage of this legislation will extend eligibility to 90,000 veterans who served in Vietnam and may have been exposed to this dangerous chemical. Some thought this day would never come for the blue water Navy veterans. Finding over $1 billion in the Federal budget is not an easy task. Many people even said it was impossible.

I thank the chairman for sitting down with the veteran service organizations, working with staff, and agreeing to find an alternative funding source to right this wrong. I am proud that this committee was able to, once again, reach a bipartisan agreement to move forward with legislation that does what is right for our Nation's veterans.

While there was disagreement about the pay-for in the past, the solution in this bill is fair. It does not cut benefits for one group of veterans to pay for the benefits of others. It requires all veterans, whether they served on Active Duty, in the Reserves, or as guardsmen and -women, to pay for the same VA home loan funding fee.

With the move to an operational Reserve, reservists and guardsmen and -women are deploying alongside Active Duty servicemembers into harm's way. It is fair for VA to charge the same fee across the board. The funding fee allows the VA to continue guaranteeing home loans to current and future servicemembers and veterans. Disabled veterans are exempt from paying the fee.

Now, we were able to do this by working together, and I want to thank Chairman ROE for identifying the solution. A special measure of credit must also go to the Vietnam Veterans of America for their steadfast advocacy for blue water veterans. Because of VVA's efforts, it is my hope that never again will another group of veterans face the same problems that they did.

I would also like to add that, before we take this historic vote, we must remember toxic exposures continue to occur. Since 9/11, servicemembers have been exposed to burn pits and mefloquine, both of which are likely causing serious health complications.

And we can't forget our servicemembers who have been exposed to atomic radiation and those struggling with Gulf War illnesses. Not every exposure can be avoided, but their risks should be tracked, understood, and mitigated. The servicemember must receive timely healthcare and disability compensation if exposure causes adverse health conditions and disease.

We must build a system that proactively identifies, investigates, diagnoses, treats, and heals toxic exposures, as well as one that also holds the Department of Defense accountable.

My feeling is that, if we are using presumptions, it means that we are already losing the battle. It means we haven't documented who was exposed to what, so we are just going to assume that everyone was exposed.

H.R. 299 makes other important reforms, including adjusting the date of the presumption for veterans exposed to Agent Orange and in the Korean DMZ, so that those exposed during a period of testing become eligible. It directs the Secretary to reach out to veterans who have previously been denied to inform them of the new law and how to file a new claim.

The bill also requires that VA use language that is easily understood. H.R. 299 also expands the presumption for Agent Orange exposure to children born with spina bifida to veteran parents exposed in Thailand.

Lastly, the bill mandates that VA report to Congress within 180 days after enactment on the result of the epidemiological study conducted on Gulf War veterans who are suffering from Gulf War illness.

I am proud that we are fixing this broken promise to the blue water veterans today; but there are many others in the making, and we need to address them as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the kind words from my friend Mr. TAKANO. We worked together closely on the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO), the lead sponsor of this bill, who has doggedly pursued this. This issue has been a problem for decades. Finally, tonight, on the House side, we are going to come to a conclusion.

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues in the House to support my legislation, H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act.

More than 6 decades ago, the United States deployed troops to Vietnam to fight communism and protect our national security interests abroad. Over the course of 20 years, American troops fought side by side with Vietnamese forces. Tragically, more than 58,000 American soldiers lost their lives during the conflict.

However, in the aftermath of the war, the United States government linked chemicals in Agent Orange, a powerful herbicide used by U.S. forces, to many harmful medical conditions affecting those who served in or around Vietnam.

While the Federal Government has provided for those who have served on Vietnamese soil, those who have served in the territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam lack the compensation and treatment they deserve.

Despite undeniable evidence that Agent Orange entered the South China Sea and contaminated shipboard systems and countless studies that clearly show the connection between Agent Orange and higher rates of serious disease among shipboard veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs continues to deny claims from the blue water Navy Vietnam veterans.

The brave sailors who served in the Vietnam war were willing to pay the ultimate price for their country, and many did just that. Providing adequate medical care to those who survive when they return home is the least we can do to show our appreciation for their service.

My bill, H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, would restore the presumption of service connection to the blue water Navy veterans, ensuring they receive proper treatment for the health conditions

they acquired in their service to our Nation.

Since I was elected, I have fought to ensure our Nation's veterans have proper medical care, which is why I first introduced this legislation. However, passage of this bill today would not be possible without Mrs. Susie Belanger, who worked tirelessly to raise awareness of this issue; Chairman PHIL ROE and the House Veterans' Affairs Committee staff for their unwavering support; and the dedication of thousands of Americans who called their representatives, urging they cosponsor this legislation.

Every day, thousands of brave veterans who served in the Vietnam war fight the health effects of Agent Orange exposure. Many are in pain and suffering. It is far past time we pass this critical legislation and give them the comfort and care they deserve.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY), my good friend and colleague, who has been with this issue since four Congresses ago. He is the original, first Democratic cosponsor on the current bill before us. It is my honor to yield to him.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. TAKANO for yielding and for his hard work on the Veterans' Affairs Committee to bring this important milestone for Vietnam veterans to the floor today. And I also want to thank Chairman ROE for the hard work that obviously went in in terms of the markup process, the negotiations with all the different members, and to make all the pieces fit together; and your colleague, the ranking member, Mr. WALZ, who, again, was a partner through that process; Mr. VALADAO, who is, again, the lead sponsor as well. Again, this is a real team effort.

There were 330 cosponsors to this bill, which, frankly, there are not a lot of bills that you can really say that about. Obviously, there were some impediments that we had to sort of work our way through. This was good, hard work, real legislating, that brought this measure to the floor.

As has been said, back in 2001 the VA ruled against a Navy veteran, Mr. Jonathan Haas, who served on the ammunition ship USS *Mount Katmai* off the coast of Vietnam, in his attempt to get Agent Orange benefits using the presumption that, again, extended to folks who served on the ground forces. Again, the foot-on-the-ground rule was used by the VA to deny Mr. Haas his claim; and, again, it has acted as an obstacle ever since.

In the 112th Congress, a Blue Water Vietnam Veterans Act was introduced in 2011. Didn't pass. In the 113th Congress, a similar bill was introduced, and it didn't pass. Again, in the last Congress, the 114th, in 2015, we had another measure which was introduced and didn't pass.

Yes, we are here today, for the first time ever, to address this grave injustice—which uses a very arbitrary, technical rule that defies common sense—and open a path for folks who served in the U.S. Navy, our sea forces, to make sure that they get equal treatment in terms of getting the care that they need and, frankly, that they have earned.

If you look at some of the other countries that have dealt with this issue, like the Royal Navy of Australia, they have actually shown that folks who served in the Royal Australian Navy in Vietnam, one of our great allies during that conflict, actually had a higher incidence of cancer than folks who served in the land forces.

So it is high time that we move forward with this measure, again, with all the grassroots support across the country with all the VSOs. Paul Dillon, a retired master chief petty officer who served in the U.S. Navy, who is from Gales Ferry, Connecticut, is watching like a hawk this measure, as are many of his colleagues who served in that era.

I think they are going to feel some measure of confidence that the system actually listened to the external pressure that has built up year in and year out since 2001 to restore justice in the VA system, to make sure that those who served on the seas are treated the same way as those who served on the ground in that conflict.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge passage of this measure and, again, congratulate the hard work of those on the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), vice chair of the committee and one of the most ardent supporters of our Nation's veterans.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 299, the blue water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act.

Mr. Speaker, this is really a great day in the United States Congress, Mr. Speaker, and a great day for our heroes, our blue water Navy veterans. This important piece of legislation will enable blue water Navy veterans to receive the compensation benefits they have earned and deserve.

In 2002, the VA unjustly removed the disability eligibility to almost 100,000 veterans who served in the territorial seas of Vietnam during the Vietnam war. This bill restores the presumption of service connection for those suffering from diseases that have been linked to Agent Orange.

Our Nation's heroes have answered the call to protect the liberties we enjoy on a daily basis. Today it is our turn to answer the call and assist our veterans in return. I urge my colleagues to support this very important bill.

I want to thank Chairman ROE and Representative VALADAO for leading the charge and not giving up. I know we didn't agree on the pay-for initially. Chairman ROE did not give up. He worked tirelessly on behalf of our veterans. I appreciate it so very much.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to serve on this committee. Let's pass this good bill and get it to the Senate.

□ 1700

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN), one of the senior members of our Veterans' Affairs Committee and an incredible support for our Nation's heroes.

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 299.

American Samoa is home to a great many veterans, especially on a per capita basis, as our people enlist at high rates in the U.S. Armed Forces. On their behalf, I am pleased to support the bipartisan Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, recognizing the realities faced by those veterans who served in the region's waters.

On a personal note, my older brother served in the U.S. Navy in the Gulf of Tonkin and other area waters during Vietnam. This legislation recognizes the nature of the service of these veterans who did their duty in wartime. This bill honors their mission and helps keep the commitments we owe our veterans.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BERGMAN), chairman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee and a Vietnam veteran.

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act.

Mr. Speaker, I witnessed firsthand the scope of Agent Orange exposure experienced by our servicemen and -women while in Vietnam. I am one of that group of veterans.

Congress recognized the dangerous health consequences of exposure by passing the Agent Orange Act of 1991, which extended disability compensation to veterans who served in Vietnam or its inland waterways between the years of 1962 and 1975. While the Agent Orange Act provided benefits for tens of thousands of Vietnam mainland veterans, it overlooked the blue water Navy veterans who served on the ships off of the coast.

Those dedicated veterans served our country honorably and are now dealing with health problems due to Agent Orange exposure. This is why I am a proud cosponsor of H.R. 299, which extends the disability benefits to veterans who served in the blue water Navy in Vietnam.

Mr. Speaker, veterans in Michigan's First District have greatly sacrificed and earned these benefits, and I look forward to ensuring that their service is honored.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN), a former member of our committee.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, of which I am a proud cosponsor.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. VALADAO) for his incredible leadership introducing this important legislation.

This bill expands treatment coverage for those affected by Agent Orange to not only those who served on the ground, but to those servicemembers, who are known as blue water Navy vets, who were affected while serving our Nation at sea.

In my home county of Suffolk, which has the highest concentration of veterans in the State of New York, hundreds of Vietnam veterans and their families will now be able to receive the benefits they have earned. These brave servicemembers have put their lives on the line for our great Nation, and they have earned nothing less than the highest quality of care.

Additionally, this legislation includes my bill, the Flexible VA Loan Guarantee Act, which expands a veteran's opportunity for homeownership by eliminating the loan limit the VA can guarantee. This is especially critical in districts like mine, where the median home prices are higher.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROE for bringing this bill to the floor, and I urge all of my colleagues to support our Nation's veterans by voting in favor of this commonsense legislation.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN), my good friend.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROE and Mr. VALADAO for their strong leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act.

Our Nation's warfighters are told they will receive benefits and coverage through the VA because of their service, but reality shows this has not always been the case, as with Agent Orange. This legislation would correct the issue by providing rightly earned benefits to men and women who were exposed to the herbicide Agent Orange during their time of service.

Also included in the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act is language from my bipartisan bill, H.R. 4843, that provides coverage for children with spina bifida due to a parent's exposure to Agent Orange.

I thank Bill Rhodes, a veteran in my district, who has advocated tirelessly for his fellow veterans. I think it is pretty cut and dry: if you served America through the Armed Forces and were exposed to Agent Orange, our grateful country should cover the medical expenses.

Our veterans make great sacrifice, and they deserve the best benefits and care possible. The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act is a great step toward providing these benefits, and I commend Chairman ROE and the Veterans' Affairs Committee for their work to make this legislation a reality for our veterans.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON), an Air Force career officer.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I am a cosponsor on this bill, and I urge support for the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, H.R. 299.

Our sailors, when they were off the coast of Vietnam, thought that they were safe from Agent Orange, but that water was sucked into the ships. It was used for shower water, used to wash their clothes, and our sailors were impacted by it. Now we know that not only them, but their children and grandchildren have also been impacted at times. So it is far time that we passed this bill and provide protections to our veterans who are now suffering the consequences of Agent Orange.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the leadership of Chairman ROE and Mr. VALADAO for what they are doing here. This is the right thing to do.

I have talked to so many sailors who have been impacted by this, and I know they will be relieved to have this bill passed. I thank them both, and I thank the minority side as well.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining on my side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). The gentleman from California has 11½ minutes remaining.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to offer my reflections on the persistence of both Chairman ROE and Ranking Member WALZ. I think it is a great injustice that Mr. WALZ could not be here today because I know how hard he worked with Chairman ROE to find a pay-for.

Let me say, also, for the folks back in my own district, in Riverside County, Riverside County has the eighth or ninth largest absolute population of veterans in the Nation, depending on what year you are counting. But every year, we have an event known as West Coast Thunder of mostly Harley-Davidson riders who ride from the Harley-Davidson shop to Riverside National Cemetery. Most of those riders are Vietnam veterans. I know back home in my district that the veterans support committee is going to be thrilled that Congress came together on this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA), my good friend and fellow member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and the former chairman of the California State Assembly Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. TAKANO for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member WALZ, Mr. VALADAO, and, of course, Chairman ROE for their leadership on H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act. This is a great example of how Democrats and Republicans come together to do what is right for our country, as well as our veterans.

Since the Vietnam war, veterans have reported numerous health complications, including different forms of cancer related to the exposure to Agent Orange.

While the Department of Veterans Affairs currently presumes that veterans who served on the ground in Vietnam or in the Vietnamese river system were exposed to Agent Orange, that presumption has not extended to the blue water Navy veterans, that is, those veterans who served off of the Vietnam coast.

This bill, thank God, corrects that decades-long mistake and expands that presumption to those who served in the blue water Navy off of the Vietnam coast and ensures equal treatment for all of our veterans.

Additionally, the bill expands the dates of presumption to those who served along the Korean Demilitarized Zone and authorizes benefits for children born with spina bifida due to a parent's exposure to Agent Orange.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, is long overdue, and the benefits will possibly change the lives of those veterans who served in the defense of our country and in the defense of freedom of those around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 299.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers and am prepared to close, so I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I again want to thank Chairman ROE for bringing forth this very important legislation. I also want to acknowledge, again, the ranking member, TIM WALZ, for working so hard to bring this legislation to the floor. It was a long time coming. It was introduced four Congresses ago.

I believe that this is a shining moment for the Veterans' Affairs Committee and a shining moment for this Congress, for the people of this country to see us come together and do something that has been long overdue for our Vietnam veterans, often who were not welcomed home in the way that they should have been. This is a small gesture of what we can do to make amends for that lack of a proper welcoming home. This is a very proud moment for me.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 299, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support for H.R. 299 from the 10 veterans service organizations I mentioned earlier.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES,
Kansas City, MO, May 7, 2018.

Hon. JOHNNY ISAKSON,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.
Hon. DAVID P. ROE, M.D.,
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.
Hon. JON TESTER,
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.
Hon. TIM WALZ,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMEN ISAKSON AND ROE, RANKING MEMBERS TESTER AND WALZ: On behalf of the men and women of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and its Auxiliary, we are proud to offer our support for H.R.299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017, as amended, which would expand benefits for veterans who were exposed to toxic substances during their military service.

The VFW strongly agrees with the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims that it is arbitrary and capricious for veterans who have served aboard ships in the coastal waters of Vietnam to be denied presumptive benefits associated with Agent Orange exposure. For this reason, we support this legislation to end this injustice and ensure Blue Water Navy veterans receive the care and benefits they deserve.

The VFW supports expansion of benefits for Korean DMZ veterans who suffer from diseases and illnesses directly linked to Agent Orange. While many of these veterans receive presumptive disability compensation for their service-connected disabilities, hundreds of them are unjustly required to prove individual exposure. This legislation would provide them the benefits they have been unjustly denied.

This legislation would also expand coverage for those children suffering from spina bifida because of their parents' exposure to Agent Orange while serving in Thailand during the Vietnam War. This expansion makes equal the level of benefits that other children receive if they have parents who were exposed to Agent Orange.

The VFW also supports the reporting and outreach requirements in this legislation. Research related to Gulf War Illness is vital to ensuring veterans receive the care and benefits they have earned as a result of illnesses and injuries caused by their service. The outreach and reporting components related to the Blue Water Navy portion of this bill would ensure veterans receive the retroactive payments they have earned and allow Congress to oversee proper implementation of the legislation. We must never again allow these veterans to have their earned benefits taken away.

Ensuring equality between the active, Guard, and Reserve components of the military is a key goal of the VFW. For the past decade and a half, our country has been sending National Guardsmen and Reservists into harm's way at an unprecedented level, and some of them have been wounded in the line of duty. The VFW is pleased that H.R. 299, as amended, will end arbitrary differences in home loan fees and show that service in uniform earns equal opportunity to be a homeowner.

We applaud the efforts that you and your staff have made to ensure veterans receive the benefits they have earned and deserve. The VFW has been a longtime advocate for the expansion of these benefits and we join you in celebrating this legislative victory which equalizes benefits for those who have worn our nation's uniform. We look forward to an expeditious process that will lead to this legislation's passage into law as soon as possible.

Sincerely,
CARLOS U. FUENTES,
Director,
VFW National Legislative Service.

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA,
Alexandria, VA, May 7, 2018.

Hon. PHIL ROE,
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.
Hon. TIM WALZ,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROE AND RANKING MEMBER WALZ: On behalf of the over 350,000 members of the Military Officers Association of America, I am writing to you about H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act, and the ''discussion draft'' that I understand will be introduced imminently. MOAA appreciates the open dialogue you have both maintained in the process of formulating this solution to a decades old injustice to our Vietnam veterans.

MOAA has always supported restoring the presumption of herbicide exposure to Blue Water Navy Veterans. MOAA further supports the extension of the presumption to veterans who served on the Korean DMZ from September 1, 1967, to August 31, 1971, as well as benefits to children born with spina bifida of veterans who served in Thailand during the Vietnam conflict.

I was disappointed with the understanding the ''pay for'' of this disability benefit was raising VA home loan fees. This resource option places the financial burden solely on that 1% of the U.S. population who served their nation in time of conflict and relieves the remaining 99% of our nation's population of bearing any financial responsibility or liability. In short, those who sacrificed will continue to sacrifice and subsidize a solution to resolve the toxic exposure of veterans who provided our nation's security and defense.

I am, however, grateful that you have included a provision that MOAA proposed to use a portion of these funds towards a report on a follow-up study on certain Gulf War illnesses. I also sincerely appreciate your commitment to address additional toxic exposures impacting our veterans in the upcoming terms of Congress. For those reasons, MOAA supports H.R. 299 with the proposed amendments discussed above.

Sincerely,
LT GEN DANA T. ATKINS,
USAF (Ret),
President and CEO.

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA,
Silver Spring, MD, April 20, 2018.

Hon. PHIL ROE,
Chairman, House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Washington, DC.
Hon. TIM WALZ,
Ranking Member, House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR DR. ROE AND CONGRESSMAN WALZ: On behalf of the members, officers, and Board of Directors of Vietnam Veterans of America, we are writing to you to again voice our support for H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act. This legislation would restore presumptive coverage for service-connected ills that afflict several thousand naval personnel who served in the Vietnam theatre of operations—coverage that the Department of Veterans Affairs abruptly ended in March 2002.

During the Vietnam War, some 20 million gallons of ''Agent Orange'' and other toxic substances was sprayed to remove jungle foliage around fire bases and to deny the enemy the ability to grow or harvest crops. As you know, toxic chemicals in these herbicides have been linked to several afflictions, including non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, various cancers, Type II diabetes, and Parkinson's disease. The Agent Orange Act of 1991 empowered the VA Secretary to declare certain illnesses presumptive to exposure to Agent Orange, enabling veterans who served in Southeast Asia to receive health care and disability compensation for these afflictions. In March 2002, however, the VA ceased awarding benefits to so-called blue water veterans, limiting those eligible only to ''boots on the ground'' in-country vets. There was no scientific basis for this move by the VA, nor any involvement of real scientists in this money driven bureaucratic decision. It is time that this wrong done to Blue Water veterans of Vietnam, and their families be set right. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) firmly established the biological plausibility for the exposure of these faithfully serving sailors.

The addition of those who served on the DMZ in Korea at any time corrects another injustice of the VA bureaucratic decision-making that also had no basis in fact. After the spraying of the herbicides in heavy doses along this limited area, nothing was ever done to clean up the soil or the groundwater, so that all who served later were exposed, and therefore should be eligible for benefits and health care as well.

Blue water veterans suffering with any of the presumptive service-connected maladies that the VA acknowledges to be associated with exposure to Agent Orange ought not be excluded from receiving healthcare services and disability compensation for which their boots-on-the-ground brother and sister veterans are eligible. They, too, served honorably and well, and Congressman Valadao's bill, once it is enacted into law, will accord them benefits that they have earned.

All of us at Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) are grateful for your bipartisan leadership to find an offset, and to at last correct the injustice to these veterans and their families.

Respectfully,
JOHN ROWAN,
National President/CEO.

PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA,
Washington, DC, April 20, 2018.

Hon. PHIL ROE,
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROE: On behalf of Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), I am writing to express our support for the House Veterans' Affairs Committee's efforts to amend title 38, United States Code to extend presumption of exposures to herbicides containing dioxin, including Agent Orange, to veterans who served in ''blue water'' areas.

Before 1997, Vietnam Veterans were eligible for a presumption of exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides if ''during active military, naval or air service they had served in the Republic of Vietnam'' unless there was evidence they had not been exposed to Agent Orange. This policy was later amended so that service on the ground in Vietnam and service in inland waterways ''brown water'' was required to receive a presumption of exposure.

PVA applauds you for making the necessary amendments to include veterans who had served in ''blue water'' areas.

Respectfully,
CARL BLAKE,
Executive Director.

MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART,
Springfield, VA, April 20, 2018.

Hon. DAVID P. ROE,
Chairman, House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROE: On behalf of the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH), whose membership is comprised entirely of combat wounded veterans, I am pleased to offer our support for your draft legislation to extend presumptive service connection for diseases associated with exposure to Agent Orange to Vietnam veterans of the Blue Water Navy, and veterans who served m the Korean demilitarized zone (DMZ) from September 1, 1967 to August 31, 1971.

Under the Agent Orange Act of 1991, Congress established presumptive service connection for Vietnam veterans suffering from illnesses associated with exposure to herbicides. Since 2002, however, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has chosen to interpret that law to exclude veterans who served on ships off the coast of Vietnam, commonly known as Blue Water Navy veterans. Like you, MOPH recognizes that Blue Water Navy veterans have always suffered from illnesses associated with Agent Orange exposure at high rates, and this decision by VA represents an injustice that should be corrected immediately.

MOPH also supports the provision of your bill that would extend the same presumptive service connection to veterans who served on the Korean DMZ from September 1, 1967 to August 31, 1971, as they were similarly exposed to Agent Orange while performing their duties.

MOPH thanks you for your leadership on this issue, and your continued commitment to veterans and their families. We look forward to working with you to ensure the passage of this important legislation.

Respectfully,

NEIL VAN ESS,
National Commander.

MILITARY—VETERANS ADVOCACY, INC.,
Slidell, Louisiana, April 20, 2018.

Re Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act.

Hon. PHIL ROE,
Chairman, House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: As you know, Military—Veterans Advocacy has consistently supported legislation to correct the plight of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans. In 2002. the VA Secretary implemented a policy that divested these veterans of the presumption of Agent Orange exposure. H.R. 299 is the current version of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act which will partially restore this presumption. This bill is widely supported by the veterans community and has 329 co-sponsors in the House.

I appreciate the fact that you held a Legislative Hearing on the bill in April of 2017 and attempted a mark-up this past November. I also understand the constraints of the Pay As You Go Act of 2010 which requires an offset Military—Veterans Advocacy's position is that we will support any offset required to correct this injustice. I know that your Committee staff has been working tirelessly to craft an offset acceptable to all parties and I assure you that we appreciate and thank them and you for this hard work.

Our understanding is that H.R. 299 will be scheduled for another mark-up hearing on April 26th. Please feel free to represent to the Committee that the bill, and its discussion draft, have the complete support of Military—Veterans Advocacy and the veterans we represent. I have been informed of the planned offset and I believe it is an equitable avenue for financing this bill.

It is imperative that H.R. 299 become law. Blue Water Navy veterans are dying every day, often leaving their families destitute. This bill has been pending for seven years and we must restore the presumption to those who served in Vietnamese bays. harbors and territorial seas.

Again thank you for your effort on our behalf and I look forward to working with you on other toxic exposure issues in the future.

Sincerely,

JOHN B. WELLS,
Commander USN (Retired), Executive Director.

DAV, NATIONAL SERVICE & LEGISLATIVE HEADQUARTERS,
Washington, DC, April 20, 2018.

Hon. DR. PHIL ROE,
Chairman, House Committee on Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROE: On behalf of DAV and our more than one million members, all of whom were injured or made ill during wartime service, I write to offer our support for approving legislation that would provide a presumption of service connection for ''Blue Water'' Navy veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam as well as veterans exposed to Agent Orange near the Korean demilitarized zone (DMZ).

The Agent Orange Act of 1991 required the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide presumptive service connection to Vietnam veterans with illnesses that the National Academy of Sciences directly linked to Agent Orange exposure. Yet, in 2002, the VA decided to cover only veterans who could prove that they had ''boots on the ground'' during the Vietnam War. Because of this decision, thousands of Vietnam veterans were excluded from receiving benefits although these ''Blue Water'' Navy veterans had significant Agent Orange exposure from drinking and bathing in contaminated water just offshore. It is simply inequitable that veterans who served on ships no more distant from the spraying of herbicides than many who served on land have been arbitrarily and unjustly denied benefits because they are excluded from the presumption of service connection for herbicide-related disabilities.

DAV strongly supports Section 1 (Clarification of Presumptions of Exposure for Veterans Who Served in Vicinity of Republic of Vietnam) of the discussion draft dated April 16, 2018, based on DAV Resolution No. 18, which calls for legislation to expressly provide that the phrase ''served in the Republic of Vietnam'' include service in the territorial waters offshore.

Enactment of this legislation would provide ''Blue Water'' Navy Vietnam veterans the disability and health care benefits they earned as a result of exposure to Agent Orange. Eligibility for VA benefits under this legislation would be retroactive to September 25, 1985, the date VA began providing disability compensation to veterans with medical disorders related to Agent Orange providing long overdue justice to thousands of veterans who were excluded by the VA in 2002.

In accordance with DAV Resolution No. 25, we also support Section 2 of this discussion draft, to recognize September 1, 1967 as the earliest date for exposure to herbicides on the Korean DMZ. This change will provide veterans greater equity with respect to herbicide exposure and the presumptive diseases associated therein.

Currently, VA regulations provide that any veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, served between April 1, 1968, and August 31, 1971, in a unit that, as determined by the Department of Defense, operated in or near the Korean DMZ in an area in which herbicides are known to have been applied during that period, shall be presumed to have been exposed during such service to an herbicide agent. Section 2 would define the exposure to herbicides as a veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, served in or near the Korean demilitarized zone (DMZ), during the period beginning on September 1, 1967, and ending on August 31, 1971.

DAV does not have a resolution specific to Section 3 (Loans Guaranteed Under Home Loan Programs of Department of Veterans Affairs) or Section 4 (Information Gathering for Department of Veterans Affairs Home Loan Appraisals) and takes no position on these sections.

Chairman Roe, thank you for introducing and moving this important legislation and for your continued efforts to support our nation's veterans disabled in their service.

Respectfully,

GARRY J. AUGUSTINE,
Executive Director, Washington Headquarters.

BLUE WATER NAVY VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION,
April 20, 2018.

DR. PHIL ROE,
Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROE: On behalf of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association (BWN), we plead with the United States Congress to allow the proposed pay for to be used in supporting the passage of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017, which is the sole purpose of our existence as an Association. This has been our top priority, and we have worked hard to ensure that our Navy Veterans and Shipmates receive the benefits that they rightly deserve for their sacrifices to our nation.

Veteran and Military Service Organizations across this country should be running to the opportunity to stand for us, considering we have stood for them for more than 50 years. While we were proud to stand with them when the original Agent Orange Act was passed in 1991, in 2002 when our benefits were stripped from us, we had to go on a 16–year campaign to get many of them to be on our side again.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has failed our nation's Veterans on this issue, and it is now up to Congress to provide the requisite medical coverage by passing this legislation. If there is every any doubt why a group of service members are all coming down with, and dying from the same illnesses, then the Department of Veterans Affairs should have a duty to assist them regardless of the cost. Many of our Shipmates have died waiting for the day their benefits would be restored, and so have their widows. As we approach the final passage of this legislation on Memorial Day, we send our thoughts and prayers to our fallen Shipmates and their loved ones!

We ask that you strongly encourage your colleagues to vote for this legislation once it is brought to the floor for a vote. We applaud you and your staff who are actively fighting for a group of Veterans that has long been abandoned by the VA and deprived of much needed medical care, we can't thank these saintly people enough.

Thank you for taking an active role in such an important issue to the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans community by working to improve the lives of our remaining 90,000 Sailors who served our great nation.

Very Respectfully,

MIKE YATES,
National Commander.
MICHAEL J. LITTLE,

National Executive Director.

FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION,
April 19, 2018.

Hon. PHIL ROE,
Chairman, House Veterans Affairs Committee, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROE: The Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) supports the ''Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act'' (H.R. 299) that would clarify a presumption for filing disability claims with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for ailments associated with exposure to the Agent Orange herbicide during the Vietnam War. FRA believes Congress should recognize that so-called ''Blue water'' veterans were exposed to Agent Orange herbicide and authorize presumptive status for VA disability claims associated with this exposure.

We understand that the bill will be amended to provide for a fee on VA home loan mortgages to cover the estimated cost for providing the presumption for the ''Blue Water'' veterans, and this fee will not apply to any veteran with a disability rating.

The Association appreciates your strong leadership on this issue. FRA stands ready to provide assistance in advancing this legislation.

Sincerely.

THOMAS J. SNEE,
National Executive Director.

THE AMERICAN LEGION,
June 22, 2018.

Hon. DAVID VALADAO,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE VALADAO: On behalf of the 2 million members of The American Legion, we heartily support the provisions of H.R. 299, legislation to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

This legislation, as written, includes as part of the Republic of Vietnam its territorial seas for purposes of the presumption of service connection for diseases associated with exposure by veterans to certain herbicide agents while in Vietnam. It also includes American servicemen who served in the Korean demilitarized zone (DMZ) between September 1, 1967 and August 31, 1971.

The American Legion strongly supports legislation to expand the presumption of Agent Orange exposure to any military personnel who served on any vessel during the Vietnam War that came within 12 nautical miles of the coastlines of Vietnam, as well as in the Korean DMZ between 1967 and 1971. Our organization feels that our nation's defenders should receive the full benefits to which they are entitled.

Through Resolution No. 35, Agent Orange, passed at the 2016 National Convention, The American Legion supports legislation ''to amend title 38, United States Code, section 1116, to provide entitlement to these presumptions for those veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange while serving in areas other than the Republic of Vietnam where Agent Orange was tested, sprayed, or stored.''

Thank you again for your continued commitment to the men and women in uniform and the nation's veterans and for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

DENISE ROHAN,
National Commander, The American Legion.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, the VA estimates that there are 6.6 million living Vietnam-era veterans; there are 58,220 who died in that war; and there only will be about 4.4 million remaining in just 10 short years. That means we will lose 2.2 million Vietnam-era veterans in the next 10 years, which is an average of about 523 Vietnam-era veterans per day.

We must now act because, if we don't, blue water Navy veterans may not be around to receive the benefits they and their loved ones have been waiting on for so long. We owe it to the brave men and women veterans who served offshore during the Vietnam era to cease waiting on perfect science and provide compensation benefits for conditions they may have developed because of exposure to Agent Orange.

I am not the only one who believes this. H.R. 299 has broad bipartisan support: 330 cosponsors. I think I can speak for all of us when I say that H.R. 299, as amended, does the right thing for our blue water Navy veterans.

Mr. Speaker, this is personal for our Vietnam-era veterans like myself. I served and walked the territory not long after in Korea, over 40 years ago.

We have done great work on the committee: We passed an accountability bill this year, a way to speed up disability claims. The Forever GI Bill funded the Veterans Choice Program. We just passed the VA MISSION Act, just a few of the things that our committee in a bipartisan way, has done.

But there is a little inconvenience out there that we have 90,000 blue water Navy veterans who are being left behind—not after today.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the other side of the aisle. We worked hand in hand.

And I thank the staffs—I don't think they get enough credit—for the hard work that the staffs do behind the scenes. When we seem to find a blind alley and can't get to a conclusion, they continue to work in a bipartisan way to find a way to get to yes.

I also thank all of the outside groups that kept this issue in front of us for decades.

When I got the chairmanship a year and a half ago, I said one of the things that I will base my chairmanship on is if we can get this solved and do the right thing for our blue water Navy veterans. Today, we are going to do the right thing in this House and send it to the Senate, where they will do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support H.R. 299, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 299, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RUTHERFORD) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 299, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 5783, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The second electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

BLUE WATER NAVY VIETNAM VETERANS ACT OF 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 299) to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 382, nays 0, not voting 45, as follows:

[Roll No. 289]

YEAS—382

Abraham	Biggs	Bucshon
Adams	Bilirakis	Budd
Aderholt	Bishop (GA)	Burgess
Aguilar	Bishop (MI)	Bustos
Allen	Bishop (UT)	Butterfield
Amash	Blum	Byrne
Amodei	Blumenauer	Calvert
Arrington	Blunt Rochester	Capuano
Babin	Bonamici	Cárdenas
Bacon	Bost	Carson (IN)
Banks (IN)	Boyle, Brendan F.	Carter (GA)
Barletta		Carter (TX)
Barr	Brady (TX)	Cartwright
Barragán	Brat	Castor (FL)
Barton	Brooks (AL)	Castro (TX)
Bass	Brooks (IN)	Chabot
Beatty	Brown (MD)	Cheney
Bera	Brownley (CA)	Cicilline
Bergman	Buchanan	Clark (MA)
Beyer	Buck	Clay

Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Crowley
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Denham
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes (KS)
Esty (CT)
Evans
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Grothman
Guthrie
Hanabusa
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamb
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Lesko
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (MN)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meng
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Norman
Nunes
O'Halleran
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruiz
Russell
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—45

Black
Blackburn
Brady (PA)
Carbajal
Chu, Judy
Clarke (NY)
Cuellar
Cummings
Curtis
DeGette
Delaney
DeSantis
Doggett
Donovan
Ellison
Engel
Gomez
Gowdy
Gutiérrez
Johnson, Sam
Lujan Grisham, M.
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Marchant
Meeks
Moore
O'Rourke
Payne
Pearce
Pocan
Polis
Rice (SC)
Rooney, Thomas J.
Rosen
Ross
Ruppersberger
Rush
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sires
Thompson (MS)
Tsongas
Walz
Wilson (SC)

□ 1853

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 289.

COOPERATE WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND WATCH ACT OF 2018

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5783) to provide a safe harbor for financial institutions that maintain a customer account at the request of a Federal or State law enforcement agency, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 379, nays 4, not voting 44, as follows:

[Roll No. 290]

YEAS—379

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barragán
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Blum
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (TX)
Brat
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Connolly
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Denham
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes (KS)
Esty (CT)
Evans
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Gianforte
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Grothman
Guthrie
Hanabusa
Handel
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamb
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Lesko
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (MN)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Marino
Marshall
Mast
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meng
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Norman
Nunes
O'Halleran
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruiz
Russell
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas

Veasey	Wasserman Schultz	Wilson (FL)
Vela	Waters, Maxine	Wittman
Velázquez	Watson Coleman	Womack
Visclosky	Weber (TX)	Woodall
Wagner	Webster (FL)	Yarmuth
Walberg	Welch	Yoder
Walden	Wenstrup	Yoho
Walker	Westerman	Young (AK)
Walorski	Williams	Young (IA)
Walters, Mimi		Zeldin

NAYS—4

Amash	Griffith
Garrett	Massie

NOT VOTING—44

Black	Gowdy	Rice (SC)
Blackburn	Gutiérrez	Rosen
Brady (PA)	Johnson, Sam	Ross
Carbajal	Knight	Ruppersberger
Chu, Judy	Lujan Grisham, M.	Rush
Clarke (NY)	Maloney, Carolyn B.	Scott (VA)
Cummings	Marchant	Scott, David
Curtis	Meeks	Sewell (AL)
DeGette	Moore	Shea-Porter
Delaney	O'Rourke	Sires
DeSantis	Payne	Thompson (MS)
Doggett	Pearce	Tsongas
Donovan	Pocan	Walz
Ellison	Polis	Wilson (SC)
Engel		
Gomez		

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1902

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6157, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2019, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2083, ENDANGERED SALMON AND FISHERIES PREDATION PREVENTION ACT

Ms. CHENEY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–783) on the resolution (H. Res. 961) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6157) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2083) to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to reduce predation on endangered Columbia River salmon and other nonlisted species, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

MAKING TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS TO CERTAIN MARINE FISH CONSERVATION STATUTES

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4528) to make technical amendments to certain marine fish conservation statutes, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4528

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. BILLFISH CONSERVATION ACT OF 2012.

Section 4(c)(1) of the Billfish Conservation Act of 2012 (16 U.S.C. 1827a(c)(1)) is amended by inserting ''and retained'' after ''landed''.

SEC. 2. SHARK CONSERVATION ACT OF 2010.

The Act entitled ''An Act to amend the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to improve the conservation of sharks'', approved January 4, 2011 (Public Law 111–348; 124 Stat. 3668), is amended—

(1) by striking section 104 and inserting the following:

''SEC. 104. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

''Nothing in this title or the amendments made by this title shall be construed as affecting, altering, or diminishing in any way the authority of the Secretary of Commerce to establish such conservation and management measures as the Secretary considers necessary and appropriate under sections 302(a)(3) and 304(g) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1852(a)(3), 1854(g)).''; and

(2) in section 1, by striking the item relating to section 104 and inserting the following:

''Sec. 104. Rule of construction.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Today, we are considering an amendment to the Billfish Conservation Act that was passed in 2012. Unfortunately, when it was passed, there was a loophole in the bill. What this bill today does is close that loophole, preserving the original congressional intent, while also preserving traditional markups in Hawaii, as well as in our Pacific territories. It is supported by everybody and their third cousin.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a 2-page letter of support from a broad coalition of sportsmen's groups, manufacturing associations, and conservation groups, plus a full list of the supporting organizations for this bill.

DECEMBER *19, 2017*.

The Hon. ROB BISHOP
Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.
Hon. RAÚL GRIJALVA
Ranking Member, House Committee on Natural Resources, Washington, DC.

Dear CHAIRMAN BISHOP AND RANKING MEMBER GRIJALVA: we strongly urge the House Natural Resources Committee to immediately consider and pass out of committee S. 396, a bill to make a technical amendment to the Billfish Conservation Act of 2012 (P. L. 112–183). The Senate passed S. 396 by unanimous consent on October 2, 2017, receiving no objections or holds during the process to hotline and clear the bill. Considering such bipartisan support in the Senate for this important conservation legislation for Pacific billfish, it is our sincere request that the House Natural Resources Committee clear this bill as soon as possible and have the bill move out of the House under suspension.

S. 396 provides a technical amendment to the Billfish Conservation Act (BCA) to clarify a slight ambiguity related to the treatment of covered Pacific billfish under the law. The BCA was passed by both the House and Senate with broad bipartisan support on October 5, 2012. The legislation was a rare event in Congress where Members on both sides of the aisle saw the wisdom of passing a bill that would put in place a critical prohibition on the sale of billfish in the continental U.S. The law was intended to put similar prohibitions on the sale of Pacific billfish as those for Atlantic billfish, effectively eliminating an estimated 30,000 billfish being imported to the U.S. each year from the Pacific.

However, over five years since passage of the BCA, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) failed to issue regulations to properly implement the law. Failure by NMFS to issue regulations to implement the BCA is effectively undermining the conservation goals of the law and creating uncertainty, where there should be none, on whether Pacific billfish can be sold in the continental U.S. The House passage of S. 396 would eliminate this ambiguity.

The legislative history in both the House and Senate is extremely clear that the BCA was written to allow traditional, cultural fishing and markets for billfish in Hawaii and the Pacific Insular Area, but otherwise eliminated the market for billfish in the remainder of the U.S. House passage of S. 396 would make this absolutely clear and would immediately put into force the critical conservation requirements of the BCA.

The Billfish Conservation Act of 2012 was a great conservation win for saltwater anglers. We request you pass S. 396 out of committee to further solidify this victory for preserving Pacific billfish.

Sincerely,

Mike Nussman, President & CEO, American Sportfishing Association; Jeff Angers, President, Center for Sportfishing Policy; Patrick Murray, President, Coastal Conservation; Jeff Crane, President, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation; Guy Harvey, President, Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation; Nehl Horton, President, International Game Fish Association; Thom Dammrich, President, National Marine Manufacturers Association; Ellen Peel, President, The Billfish Foundation.

International Game Fish Association; Greenpeace; Wild Oceans; Nature Abounds; The Pew Charitable Trusts; Oceana; Blue Ocean Institute; Sierra Club; Center for Biological Diversity; Turttle Island Restoration Network; Endangered Species Coalition; Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network; Friends of Earth; WildAid; Mobile Bay Audubon Scoety; BlueVoice.org; Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife; Ocean Conservation Research; Citrus County Audubon Society; Ocean Futures Society.

Coastal Wildlife Club; WILDCOAST; Duval Audubon Society; E.O. Wison Biophilia Center; Deleware Nature Society; Sierra Club, Delaware Chapter; Eltrose Farms; Alachua Audubon Society; Big Bend Coastal

Conservency; Biscayne Bay Waterkeeper; Florida Billfish, Inc.; Florida Wildlife Federation; Four Rivers Audubon; Friends of Gumbo Limbo; Halifax River Audubon Society; Highlands County Audubon Society; Just-in-Time Charters; Loxahatchee Group Sierra Club; Mean Tide Media, LLC; North Swell Media & Consulting.

Oklawaha Valley Audubon Society; Peace River Audubon Society; Rescue Earth; Save-A-Turtle; Sea to Shore Alliance; Shark Whisperer; Space Coast Audubon Society; Space Coast Kayaking; Wild Florida Adventures; Georgia Conservancy; Interfaith Council for the Protection of Animals & Nature; Conservation Council for Hawai'i; Marine Conservation Science Institute; Sierra Club Hawaii Chapter; Gulf Restoration Network; Downeasy Audubon; Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy; Berkshire Environmental Action Team; Cape Cod Bay Watch; New England Coastal Wildlife Alliance.

Sustainable Plymouth; SandyHook SeaLife Foundation; HerpDigest; New York Turtle and Tortoise Society; Shark Angels; Charlotte Saltwater Sport Fishing Club; North Carolina Wildlife Federation; OCEAN Magazine; PenderWatch & Conservancy; Green Alliance; Coastal Conservation League; Vermonters for Sustainable Population; American Sportfishing Association; Center for Sportfishing Policy; Coastal Conservation Association; Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation; Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation; Internationl Game Fish Association; National Marine Manufacturers Association; The Billfish Foundation.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of my bill, H.R. 4528, a bill to make technical changes to certain marine fish conservation statutes.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BISHOP—and, Mr. Speaker, I did ask my third cousin; he is in support, too—as well as Ranking Member GRIJALVA for all of their collaboration and support on this important bill.

H.R. 4528 makes technical amendments to two marine fish conservation statutes, the Billfish Conservation Act of 2012 and the Shark Conservation Act of 2010.

First, the bill amends the Billfish Conservation Act of 2012. It clarifies that the exemption from marlin and billfish fishing in Hawaii and Pacific insular areas, as is tradition, can only be sold locally. More specifically, it clarifies these fish cannot be sold to the other 49 States. This strikes a balance between preserving traditional cultural fishing in these areas and the overall intent to prevent large-scale commercial fishing of these billfish.

Second, it clarifies that, under the Shark Conservation Act of 2010, there is no language in the Shark Conservation Act that alters existing authority of the Secretary of Commerce to manage Atlantic highly migratory species under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. It also cleans up language in the Shark Conservation Act by removing an expired offset.

The main goal of this is to ensure protection against shark finning. H.R. 4528 will fix confusion within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to allow rulemaking to go forward for the Atlantic smooth dogfish, a type of shark.

This bill has support from both the sportsmen-anglers communities and conservation groups.

Again, I thank the Natural Resources Committee Chairman BISHOP and Ranking Member GRIJALVA for working with me on this. Without their support, this legislation would not be on the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues in the Chamber to support H.R. 4528, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, it is a good bill. I urge its support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4528.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1913

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL) at 7 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.

ENHANCING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING INITIATIVE ACT

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5094) to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to improve suspicious activity reporting to prevent acts of terrorism, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5094

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Enhancing Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative Act''.

SEC. 2. ENHANCING DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING OPERATIONS.

(a) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with other appropriate Federal officials, shall develop a strategy to improve the operations and activities of the Department of Homeland Security related to training, outreach, and information sharing for suspicious activity reporting to prevent acts of terrorism.

(b) CONTENTS OF STRATEGY.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description and examples of the types of information that would meet the definition of critical information for the purpose of suspicious activity reporting as well as information, including information associated with racial, religious or national origin, that would not meet the definition of critical information.

(2) Training for appropriate personnel of State and major urban area fusion centers, emergency response providers, and, as appropriate, the private sector on—

(A) methods for identifying, analyzing, and disseminating critical information, including the indicators of terrorism;

(B) methods to protect privacy and civil liberties, including preventing racial, religious, or national origin discrimination; and

(C) response protocols for submitting suspicious activity reports.

(3) Methods to improve outreach to appropriate State and major urban area fusion centers, emergency response providers, and the private sector related to suspicious activity reporting to prevent acts of terrorism.

(4) A plan to ensure that critical information is shared in a timely manner with State and major urban area fusion centers, emergency response providers, and the private sector, as appropriate, including nationwide trend analysis and other information related to terrorist threats.

(5) Methods to measure the effectiveness of the activities conducted under the strategy with respect to improving the operations and activities of the Department related to training, outreach, and information sharing to prevent acts of terrorism that have been validated through peer-reviewed empirical studies to the extent practicable.

(c) WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS.—In developing the strategy required under subsection (a) the Secretary shall take into consideration the recommendations of the working group established under section 3.

(d) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—Not less than 30 days before the release of the strategy required pursuant to subsection (a), the Secretary shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a notification of the release of the strategy and a copy of the strategy. Such notification shall include the recommendations provided by the working group established under section 3 and how such recommendations were incorporated into the strategy.

SEC. 3. SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY REPORTING WORKING GROUP.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall establish a working group on suspicious activity reporting.

(2) DEPARTMENT LIAISONS.—The Secretary shall appoint as liaisons to the working group—

(A) the Chief Privacy Officer of the Department of Homeland Security;

(B) the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties of the Department; and

(C) such other officials of the Department as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(b) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The working group established under subsection (a) shall carry out the following responsibilities:

(1) Provide advice to the Secretary regarding improvements to the operations and activities related to suspicious activity reporting to prevent acts of terrorism.

(2) At the request of the Secretary, for purposes of section 2(c), develop recommendations to improve suspicious activity reporting to prevent acts of terrorism with respect to—

(A) outreach to relevant stakeholders;

(B) information sharing;

(C) protecting personally identifiable information;

(D) protecting the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of individuals who report suspicious activity and individuals who are the subjects of such reports;

(E) preventing racial, religious, or national origin discrimination;

(F) training for emergency response providers and the private sector; and

(G) other matters, as determined by the Secretary.

(c) WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall seek the voluntary participation of not more than 20 individuals representing at least 12 diverse regions of the United States to serve as members of the working group. Members of the working group shall serve without pay. The Secretary shall seek to ensure that the working group includes members who are representatives from each of the following:

(1) State and major urban area fusion centers.

(2) State, local, tribal and territorial law enforcement agencies.

(3) Firefighters.

(4) Emergency medical services.

(5) Private sector security professionals.

(6) Nongovernmental privacy and civil liberty organizations.

(7) Any other group the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING.—Upon request, the Secretary shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a briefing on the operations and activities of the Department of Homeland Security related to training, outreach, and information sharing for suspicious activity reporting to prevent acts of terrorism, including copies of materials developed under this section.

(e) TERMINATION.—The working group under this section shall terminate on the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, except that the Secretary may extend such working group if the Secretary determines necessary.

(f) NONAPPLICABILITY OF FACA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the working group established under this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5094, the Enhancing Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative Act.

I have been a long-term proponent of the If You See Something, Say Something campaign, which was begun in New York City in 2002 by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

□ 1915

This program, along with the Suspicious Activity Reporting initiative, SAR, helps Federal, State, and local law enforcement piece together sometimes seemingly disparate pieces of information to prevent, detect, and interdict terrorist threats to the homeland.

During a recent subcommittee hearing on SARs, a witness from the New Jersey State Police explained that a SAR triggered a law enforcement investigation where a copy of ''Inspire'' magazine was found in a residence, in particular, an article on how to construct a pressure cooker bomb. The suspect admitted to planning a major attack in New York City.

This SAR was instrumental in thwarting a potential terrorist attack against our Nation.

While the FBI reviews, nationwide, SARs for investigative leads, DHS largely manages the efforts to provide information and training to State and local law enforcement, fusion centers, and other emergency response providers.

H.R. 5094 strengthens this effort by requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a strategy designed to improve the operations and activities of the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative, NSI.

This includes training; outreach; information sharing with key partners, including law enforcement officers, fusion centers, emergency response providers, and the private sector.

H.R. 5094 also empowers the Secretary to establish an NSI working group that includes representation from State and local stakeholders, the private sector, and privacy experts.

The working group will provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary on improvements to the SARs initiative. Additionally, the reporting requirement to Congress promotes transparency in these efforts and rigorous oversight by my subcommittee and others.

Last week, the Secretary of Homeland Security noted that DHS was in the midst of ''refreshing'' the SARs initiative. While I am pleased to hear that DHS is moving to enhance ''See Something, Say Something'' and SARs, the legislation before us today will ensure that the refresh is done strategically and includes input from the very stakeholders responsible for investigating and reporting SARs.

Shortly after an attack or tragedy in our Nation, leaders of both parties urge our citizens to be vigilant during their commutes and in their neighborhoods, and to report suspicious activity to law enforcement. It is important to turn public statements of support into legislative action.

This bill received strong bipartisan support in committee. The passage of this legislation will demonstrate Congress' commitment to provide commonsense legislation to help DHS continue to provide important SARs training and outreach.

I would also like to emphasize that a Secret Service detailee to my subcommittee, Pete Murphy, was very instrumental in working with other staff members in putting this legislation together.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5094, the Enhancing Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative Act.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5094 would require the Department of Homeland Security to develop a strategy to improve the training, outreach, and information it provides on Suspicious Activity Reporting to prevent acts of terrorism.

Since the September 11 attacks, we have seen that sharing information regarding suspicious activity can help local, State, and Federal law enforcement connect the dots about threats in the communities that they serve.

While it is important that ordinary citizens say something when they see something that could be a threat to their community, we must recognize that there have been instances where there have been abuses. On occasion, we have seen allegations of suspicious activity made against individuals solely based on biases regarding race, ethnicity, or religion.

H.R. 5094 seeks to prevent such discriminatory reporting by directing DHS to disseminate examples of reporting that meet the guidelines for action. Further, it instructs DHS to outline the types of suspicious activity reporting, including reporting based on race, religion, and nationality, that is prohibited. More broadly, H.R. 5094 seeks to build numerous safeguards for privacy, civil liberties, and civil rights into the suspicious activity reporting regime.

It requires the establishment of an outside working group to provide advice to the DHS Secretary on matters such as outreach, information sharing, protecting personally identifiable information, protecting privacy and civil rights, and training for emergency response providers and the private sector.

Additionally, H.R. 5094 enhances congressional oversight of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties by requiring the department to furnish Congress with copies of the materials it disseminates to stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this security measure.

Mr. Speaker, as the terrorist threats evolve, so too must our counterterrorism efforts.

Since the September 11 attacks, we have seen that raising public awareness about reporting suspicious activity can be effective at detecting, deterring, and combating terrorism in the homeland.

I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 5094 to ensure that DHS strategically engages stakeholders to improve suspicious activity reporting.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank my colleague, Mr. LANGEVIN, for his bipartisan support on this legislation, as in so many other pieces of bipartisan legislation, and for the outstanding work he does on the subcommittee and the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5094, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY AND TECHNOLOGY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2018

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5081) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish within the Transportation Security Administration the Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5081

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Surface Transportation Security and Technology Accountability Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title XVI of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 561 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new subtitle:

''Subtitle C—Surface Transportation Security

''SEC. 1621. SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (referred to in this section as the 'Administrator') shall establish within the Transportation Security Administration the Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee (referred to in this section as the 'Advisory Committee').

''(b) DUTIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Committee may advise, consult with, report to, and make recommendations to the Administrator on surface transportation security matters, including the development, refinement, and implementation of policies, programs, initiatives, rulemakings, and security directives pertaining to surface transportation security.

''(2) RISK-BASED SECURITY.—The Advisory Committee shall consider risk-based security approaches in the performance of its duties.

''(c) MEMBERSHIP.—

''(1) COMPOSITION.—The Advisory Committee shall be composed of—

''(A) voting members appointed by the Administrator under paragraph (2); and

''(B) nonvoting members, serving in an advisory capacity, who shall be designated by—

''(i) the Transportation Security Administration;

''(ii) the Department of Transportation; and

''(iii) such other Federal department or agency as the Administrator considers appropriate.

''(2) APPOINTMENT.—The Administrator shall appoint voting members from among stakeholders representing each mode of surface transportation, such as passenger rail, freight rail, mass transit, pipelines, highways, over-the-road bus, and trucking, including representatives from—

''(A) associations representing such modes of surface transportation;

''(B) labor organizations representing such modes of surface transportation;

''(C) groups representing the users of such modes of surface transportation, including asset manufacturers, as appropriate;

''(D) relevant law enforcement, first responders, and security experts; and

''(E) such other groups as the Administrator considers appropriate.

''(3) CHAIRPERSON.—The Advisory Committee shall select a chairperson from among its voting members.

''(4) TERM OF OFFICE.—

''(A) TERMS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term of each voting member of the Advisory Committee shall be two years, but a voting member may continue to serve until the Administrator appoints a successor.

''(ii) REAPPOINTMENT.—A voting member of the Advisory Committee may be reappointed.

''(B) REMOVAL.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may review the participation of a member of the Advisory Committee and remove such member for cause at any time.

''(ii) ACCESS TO CERTAIN INFORMATION.—The Administrator may remove any member of the Advisory Committee who the Administrator determines should be restricted from reviewing, discussing, or possessing classified information or sensitive security information.

''(5) PROHIBITION ON COMPENSATION.—The members of the Advisory Committee may not receive any compensation from the Government by reason of their service on the Advisory Committee.

''(6) MEETINGS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Committee shall meet at least semiannually in person or through web conferencing, and may convene additional meetings as necessary.

''(B) PUBLIC MEETINGS.—At least one of the meetings of the Advisory Committee each year shall be—

''(i) announced in the Federal Register;

''(ii) announced on a public website; and

''(iii) open to the public.

''(C) ATTENDANCE.—The Advisory Committee shall maintain a record of the persons present at each meeting.

''(D) MINUTES.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Unless otherwise prohibited by Federal law, minutes of the meetings of the Advisory Committee shall be published on the public website under subsection (e)(5).

''(ii) PROTECTION OF CLASSIFIED AND SENSITIVE INFORMATION.—The Advisory Committee may redact or summarize, as necessary, minutes of the meetings to protect classified information or sensitive security information in accordance with law.

''(7) VOTING MEMBER ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION AND SENSITIVE SECURITY INFORMATION.—

''(A) DETERMINATIONS.—Not later than 60 days after the date on which a voting member is appointed to the Advisory Committee but before such voting member may be granted any access to classified information or sensitive security information, the Administrator shall determine if such voting member should be restricted from reviewing, discussing, or possessing classified information or sensitive security information.

''(B) ACCESS.—

''(i) SENSITIVE SECURITY INFORMATION.—If a voting member is not restricted from reviewing, discussing, or possessing sensitive security information under subparagraph (A) and voluntarily signs a nondisclosure agreement, such voting member may be granted access to sensitive security information that is relevant to such voting member's service on the Advisory Committee.

''(ii) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—Access to classified materials shall be managed in accordance with Executive Order No. 13526 of December 29, 2009 (75 Fed. Reg. 707), or any subsequent corresponding Executive order.

''(C) PROTECTIONS.—

''(i) SENSITIVE SECURITY INFORMATION.—Voting members shall protect sensitive security information in accordance with part 1520 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

''(ii) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—Voting members shall protect classified information in accordance with the applicable requirements for the particular level of classification of such information.

''(8) JOINT COMMITTEE MEETINGS.—The Advisory Committee may meet with one or more of the following advisory committees to discuss multimodal security issues and other security-related issues of common concern:

''(A) Aviation Security Advisory Committee, established under section 44946 of title 49, United States Code.

''(B) Maritime Security Advisory Committee, established under section 70112 of title 46, United States Code.

''(C) Railroad Safety Advisory Committee, established by the Federal Railroad Administration.

''(9) SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS.—The Advisory Committee may request the assistance of subject matter experts with expertise related to the jurisdiction of the Advisory Committee.

''(d) REPORTS.—

''(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—The Advisory Committee shall periodically submit to the Administrator reports on matters requested by the Administrator or by a majority of the members of the Advisory Committee.

''(2) ANNUAL REPORT.—

''(A) SUBMISSION.—The Advisory Committee shall submit to the Administrator and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate an annual report that provides information on the activities, findings, and recommendations of the Advisory Committee during the preceding year.

''(B) PUBLICATION.—Not later than six months after the date that the Administrator receives an annual report under subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall publish a public version of such report, in accordance with section 552a(b) of title 5, United States Code.

''(e) ADMINISTRATION RESPONSE.—

''(1) CONSIDERATION.—The Administrator shall consider the information, advice, and recommendations of the Advisory Committee in formulating policies, programs, initiatives, rulemakings, and security directives pertaining to surface transportation security efforts.

''(2) FEEDBACK.—Not later than 90 days after the date that the Administrator receives a recommendation from the Advisory Committee under subsection (d)(2), the Administrator shall submit to the Advisory Committee written feedback on such recommendation, including—

''(A) if the Administrator agrees with such recommendation, a plan describing the actions that the Administrator has taken, will take, or recommends that the head of another Federal department or agency take to implement such recommendation; or

''(B) if the Administrator disagrees with such recommendation, a justification for such disagreement.

''(3) NOTICES.—Not later than 30 days after the date the Administrator submits feedback under paragraph (2), the Administrator shall—

''(A) notify the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate of such feedback, including the agreement or disagreement under subparagraph (A) or (B) of such paragraph, as applicable; and

''(B) provide the committees specified in subparagraph (A) with a briefing upon request.

''(4) UPDATES.—Not later than 90 days after the date the Administrator receives a recommendation from the Advisory Committee under subsection (d)(2) that the Administrator agrees with, and quarterly thereafter until such recommendation is fully implemented, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report or post on the public website under paragraph (5) an update on the status of such recommendation.

''(5) WEBSITE.—The Administrator shall maintain a public website that—

''(A) lists the members of the Advisory Committee;

''(B) provides the contact information for the Advisory Committee; and

''(C) information relating to meetings, minutes, annual reports, and the implementation of recommendations under this section.

''(f) NONAPPLICABILITY OF FACA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Advisory Committee or any subcommittee established under this section.''.

(b) ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS.—

(1) VOTING MEMBERS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall appoint the voting members of the Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee established under section 1621 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by subsection (a) of this section.

(2) NONVOTING MEMBERS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, each Federal department and agency with regulatory authority over a mode of surface transportation, as the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration considers appropriate, shall designate an appropriate representative to serve as a nonvoting member of the Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1616 the following new items:

''Subtitle C—Surface Transportation Security

''Sec. 1621. Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee.''.

SEC. 3. TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1611 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 563) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(h) ADDITIONAL UPDATE REQUIREMENTS.—Updates and reports required pursuant to subsection (g) shall—

''(1) be prepared in consultation with individuals and entity specified in subsection (b), as well as the Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee established by the Administrator pursuant to section 1621;

''(2) include information relating to technology investments by the Transportation Security Administration and the private sector that the Department supports with research, development, testing, and evaluation for aviation, air cargo, and surface transportation security; and

''(3) to the extent practicable, include a classified addendum to report sensitive transportation security risks and associated capability gaps that would be best addressed by security-related technology described in paragraph (2).''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and apply beginning with the first update and report required under subsection (g) of section 1611 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 that is required after such date

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5081, the Surface Transportation Security and Technology Accountability Act of 2018.

America's transportation sector has long been, and continues to be, a top target for terrorism. In addition to persistent threats to aviation, terrorists continue to see surface transportation as soft targets that can yield high numbers of casualties.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Protective Security, I have held numerous hearings, briefings, and roundtables dedicated to providing congressional oversight of the Transportation Security Administration's role in surface transportation security.

The U.S. surface transportation system is a dynamic, interconnected network of passenger and freight railroads, mass transit systems, over-the-road bus operators, motor carrier operators, pipelines, and maritime facilities. These systems are the bedrock of the American economy and way of life, which is precisely why they are such attractive targets for terrorists.

In addition to a number of horrific attacks against surface targets by terrorists overseas, we have recently experienced an attempted suicide bombing in New York City's Port Authority Bus Terminal. This attack was the first attempted suicide bombing on American soil and represented a startling shift in the threat landscape.

Luckily, this incident only yielded injury to the would-be attacker. However, it served as an important reminder that we must be prepared to respond to threats in all modes of transportation.

While TSA is responsible for securing all of America's transportation systems, surface transportation security has been consistently overshadowed by the amount of attention and resources dedicated to aviation security.

This imbalance is aptly illustrated by the glaring absence of surface transportation at TSA's ''Strategic Five-Year Technology Investment Plan'' as well as the ''Biennial Refresh.''

The plan is a key communication tool for TSA to help stakeholders understand the agency's priorities and to enable them to align investments and product investment initiatives accordingly.

I would like to reiterate that TSA is responsible for securing all of America's transportation systems, and that surface transportation is a key and integral element of that mission.

TSA does not procure technology for local surface transportation operators, but it does set the standards for viable security technologies and equipment for that environment. Therefore, investments related to research, development, testing, and evaluation of security technologies for surface transportation systems should be included in TSA's ''Strategic Five-Year Technology Investment Plan.''

My legislation will enhance the visibility of the surface transportation sector and ensure that TSA is positioned to address emerging threats through this critical infrastructure, which serves more than 10 billion riders in the United States annually.

My bill authorizes the establishment of a Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee that will provide stakeholders the opportunity to coordinate with TSA and comment on policy and pending regulations.

The Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee is a necessary and long-overdue complement to the Aviation Security Advisory Committee,

which has been a critical resource for the agency and stakeholders, and has led to a number of improvements in aviation security, as well as TSA processes.

Additionally, this bill explicitly directs TSA to expand the scope of its technology investment plan to incorporate investments related to surface transportation security and air cargo security.

My bill will signal to TSA that this committee takes its oversight of all transportation modes seriously and that the security of surface transportation modes should be a higher priority for the agency.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the ranking member of the Transportation and Protective Security Subcommittee, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, for cosponsoring this legislation and for her dedication to securing all modes of transportation.

I also wish to thank Chairman MCCAUL for his support of this bill and for ensuring its swift markup at committee.

Whether we talk about mass transit, passenger rail, buses, trucking, freight rail, or pipelines, I understand that surface transportation is of critical importance to all our communities, including my home district in central New York. For that reason, I urge all of my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5081, the Surface Transportation Security and Technology Accountability Act of 2018.

Mr. Speaker, every day, millions of Americans engage with surface transportation across various modes, including passenger and freight trains, commuter rail, mass transit, and buses.

These systems, which so many of us rely on, are often viewed as soft targets, so it is more important than ever that we intensify efforts to secure these critical systems.

H.R. 5081 is a step in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague from New York (Mr. KATKO) for his hard work and dedication in putting this bill together and seeing that it gets to the floor this evening.

This bill authorizes the Transportation Security Administration to form a Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee to advise on surface transportation security matters, including the development and implementation of policies and security directives. This committee will include stakeholders from each mode of surface transportation, including pipelines, as well as representatives from labor organizations, law enforcement, and the first responder community.

Importantly, H.R. 5081 requires TSA to consult with the advisory committee in the development of its technology investment plan to ensure that TSA develops new and effective security technologies for surface transportation and that we are investing in the right technology at the right time, at the right place.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan piece of legislation. Again, I commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) for his hard work on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Rhode Island for his kind words about this bill and for the bipartisanship that pervades our committee. It is a model, I think, that, Congress-wide, we could use more of. The bipartisanship that we have on this committee really is helping to keep America safer.

Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers. I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1930

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to, again, also echo the words of my colleague from New York in that there is great bipartisanship on the Homeland Security Committee. I have often said that if there is one place we are going to find bipartisanship, it is when it comes to protecting the homeland, protecting our national security, and certainly it has been evidenced by this particular bill and the several bills that we will have before us this evening.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5081 will enhance the security of mass transit and other critical surface transportation modes. This legislation is sorely needed, and I thank the chairman of the Transportation and Protective Security Subcommittee, Mr. KATKO, for his efforts.

I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 5081, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5081.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TRANSPORTATION SECURITY TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION REFORM ACT OF 2018

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5730) to require testing and evaluation of advanced transportation security screening technologies related to the mission of the Transportation Security Administration, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5730

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Transportation Security Technology Innovation Reform Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term ''Administration'' means the Transportation Security Administration.

(2) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ''Administrator'' means the Administrator of the Administration.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE.—The term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

(4) DEPARTMENT.—The term ''Department'' means the Department of Homeland Security.

SEC. 3. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS INTEGRATION FACILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the Administration a Transportation Security Administration Systems Integration Facility (TSIF) for the purposes of testing and evaluating advanced transportation security screening technologies related to the mission of the Administration. The TSIF shall—

(1) evaluate such technologies to enhance the security of transportation systems through screening and threat mitigation and detection;

(2) conduct testing of such technologies to support identified mission needs of the Administration and to meet requirements for acquisitions and procurement;

(3) to the extent practicable, provide original equipment manufacturers with test plans to minimize requirement interpretation disputes and adhere to provided test plans;

(4) collaborate with other technical laboratories and facilities for purposes of augmenting TSIF's capabilities;

(5) deliver advanced transportation security screening technologies that enhance the overall security of domestic transportation systems; and

(6) to the extent practicable, provide funding and promote efforts to enable participation by a small business concern (as such term is described under section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632)) that has an advanced technology or capability but does not have adequate resources to participate in testing and evaluation processes.

(b) STAFFING AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION.—The Administrator shall ensure adequate staffing and resource allocations for the TSIF in a manner which—

(1) prevents unnecessary delays in testing and evaluating advanced transportation security screening technologies for acquisitions and procurement determinations;

(2) ensures the issuance of final paperwork certification does not exceed 45 days after the conclusion of such testing and evaluation; and

(3) collaborates with technology stakeholders to close capabilities gaps in transportation security.

(c) TIMEFRAME.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall notify the appropriate congressional committees whenever testing and evaluation by TSIF of an advanced transportation security screening technology under this section exceeds 180 days as determined from the date on which the owner of such technology turned over such technology to the Administration after installation for testing and

evaluation purposes, as evidenced by a signed Test Readiness Notification from such owner to the Administration. Such notification shall include—

(A) information relating to the arrival date of such technology;

(B) reasons why the testing and evaluation process has exceeded 180 days; and

(C) an estimated time for completion of such testing and evaluation.

(2) RETESTING AND EVALUATION.—Advanced transportation security screening technology that fails testing and evaluation by the TSIF may be retested and evaluated.

(d) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DEPARTMENT ENTITIES AND FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The authority of the Administrator under this title shall not affect the authorities or responsibilities of any officer of the Department or of any officer of any other department or agency of the United States with respect to research, development, testing, and evaluation, including the authorities and responsibilities of the Undersecretary for Science and Technology of the Department and the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office of the Department.

SEC. 4. REVIEW OF TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITIONS PROCESS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall, in coordination with relevant officials of the Department, conduct a review of existing advanced transportation security screening technology development, acquisitions, and procurement practices within the Administration. Such review shall include—

(1) identifying process delays and bottlenecks within the Department and the Administration regarding how such technology is identified, developed, acquired, and deployed;

(2) assessing whether the Administration can better leverage existing resources or processes of the Department for the purposes of technology innovation and development;

(3) assessing whether the Administration can further encourage innovation and competition among technology stakeholders, including through increased participation of and funding for small business concerns (as such term is described under section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632));

(4) identifying best practices of other Department components or United States Government entities; and

(5) a plan to address problems and challenges identified by such review.

(b) BRIEFING.—The Administrator shall provide to the appropriate congressional committees a briefing on the findings of the review required under this section and a plan to address problems and challenges identified by such review.

SEC. 5. ADMINISTRATION ACQUISITIONS AND PROCUREMENT ENHANCEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

(1) engage in outreach, coordination, and collaboration with transportation stakeholders to identify and foster innovation of new advanced transportation security screening technologies;

(2) streamline the overall technology development, testing, evaluation, acquisitions, procurement, and deployment processes of the Administration; and

(3) ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of such processes.

SEC. 6. ASSESSMENT.

The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Chief Privacy Officer of the Department of Homeland Security, shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a compliance assessment of the Transportation Security Administration's acquisition process relating to the health and safety risks associated with implementation of screening technologies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5730, the Transportation Security Technology Innovation Reform Act of 2018. This legislation represents a culmination of years of bipartisan oversight efforts by the Homeland Security Committee and, more specifically, the Subcommittee on Transportation and Protective Security, which I chair.

My committee colleagues and I have seen, firsthand, the challenges facing TSA in delivering advanced security technologies to the front lines at airports. Technologies such as Computed Tomography and Credential Authentication Technology are years behind where they should be in deployment due to unnecessary delays, opaque testing timelines, and capacity challenges at TSA.

What is even more frustrating is that these technologies, made by American companies, are already deployed at a number of airports overseas in foreign countries, while our own government cannot efficiently test and deploy these already-proven technologies.

For far too long we have seen the traveling public wait for cutting-edge technologies while bureaucratic hindrances and government inefficiencies plague TSA's testing and evaluation process. Today, the House has the opportunity to pass a solution to this problem.

H.R. 5730 will reform and galvanize efforts to bring 21st-century solutions to persistent security challenges facing America's transportation systems. Specifically, this legislation will authorize the core functions of the TSA Systems Integration Facility, or TSIF for short.

The TSIF will be charged with conducting efficient and transparent testing of critical security technologies in a manner that is responsive to stakeholders and the needs of the traveling public.

One key problem that I often hear from technology stakeholders is that TSA does not have the bandwidth or resources to efficiently conduct testing and evaluation of new screening technologies in a timely manner.

This legislation will ensure that adequate staffing and resources are allocated to the TSIF, and that TSA is authorized to collaborate with outside laboratories and stakeholders to expedite the much-needed testing of these technologies.

Further, this legislation provides significant accountability by requiring TSA to share test plans with original equipment manufacturers in order to ensure the integrity and consistency of testing and evaluation processes. The bill includes specific metrics for reporting to Congress and stakeholders on delays in testing so that there is greater visibility into potential bureaucratic hiccups.

H.R. 5730 directs the TSA Administrator to conduct a wholesale evaluation of the agency's testing and acquisition processes and identify areas that can be streamlined and improved. This legislation emphasizes the agency's need to engage and leverage other government agencies, transportation stakeholders, and small businesses, to more effectively and expeditiously deploy critical security technologies.

Mr. Speaker, the Transportation Security Technology Innovation Reform Act of 2018 cuts straight to the heart of the problems plaguing TSA, and directly addresses issues identified by stakeholders.

As any of my committee colleagues can tell you, the threats facing transportation security now are more severe and more troubling than ever, and our ability to effectively mitigate these threats with advanced technology is of the utmost importance.

I wish to thank my friend, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Protective Security, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, whose partnership and leadership on this issue has been critical to bringing this bill to the floor today.

I also would like to thank the full committee chairman, Mr. MCCAUL, for his support of the bill and for shepherding it through the committee process.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5730, the Transportation Security Technology Innovation Reform Act of 2018. H.R. 5730 authorizes TSA's Transportation Security Administration Systems Integration Facility, or TSIF.

Threats against the transportation system are constantly evolving. They demand the TSA be proactive in developing new and innovative technologies. By authorizing the TSIF, H.R. 5730 directs TSA to evaluate, test, collaborate on and, ultimately, deliver advance screening technologies.

H.R. 5730 also includes language to ensure that TSA has the necessary staff and resources to develop the best

and most cutting-edge technology. Importantly, the bill includes language authored by the Ranking Member, Mr. THOMPSON, to enhance the level of support TSA provides to small businesses throughout TSA's technology testing and procurement process.

Greater participation of small businesses, really, where innovation happens, in the security marketplace, will not only help ensure that promising technologies are pursued; it will also help TSA move away from its reliance on a handful of large technology manufacturers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the House to support this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I want to thank my colleague from Rhode Island for his comments in support of this bill as well, and shepherding it through the process here today on the floor.

I will note—and I want to digress for a moment. We went on a congressional delegation. I led that delegation to Europe and the Middle East several months ago, and it was a bipartisan effort to evaluate the technologies in use at other airports in Europe and in the Middle East. And it was stunning for us to go to those airports and see American-made computed tomography, or 3–D scanners, already on the front lines, already doing the job, already making those airports much safer than ours are today, and those products are made here in the United States.

It is maddening that we had this bureaucratic bottleneck of testing procedures and algorithms and everything else, while the front lines are not being addressed. So this bill attempts to address that backlog, and I am very proud to have been a sponsor of it.

Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers, and I am prepared to close once the gentleman from Rhode Island does. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

H.R. 5730 is focused on closing security capability gaps and streamlining the technology acquisitions process at TSA.

When everything is said and done, TSA's ultimate mission is to ensure the safety and security of the traveling public, and H.R. 5730 would do just that.

I commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) for his work on this legislation. I think it is going to make an appreciable difference in keeping the traveling public safe.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5730, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

To use an old saying that I like to use, TSA seems to be engaged in the practice of polishing the brass while the fire bell is ringing; and the fire bell is, indeed, ringing with the bad guys trying to get scary technology through our security measures in order to do harm to the American people. And the technologies that are already existing out there are not being put on the front line, and that is a shame. This bill attempts to address that.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5730, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SECURING PUBLIC AREAS OF TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES ACT OF 2018

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5766) to improve the security of public areas of transportation facilities, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5766

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Securing Public Areas of Transportation Facilities Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS.—The term ''public and private sector stakeholders'' has the meaning given such term in section 114(u)(1)(C) of title 49, United States Code.

(2) SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ASSET.—The term ''surface transportation asset'' includes facilities, equipment, or systems used to provide transportation services by—

(A) a public transportation agency (as such term is defined in section 1402(5) of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–53; 6 U.S.C. 1131(5)));

(B) a railroad carrier (as such term is defined in section 20102(3) of title 49, United States Code);

(C) an owner or operator of—

(i) an entity offering scheduled, fixed-route transportation services by over-the road bus (as such term is defined in section 1501(4) of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–53; 6 U.S.C. 1151(4))); or

(ii) a bus terminal; or

(D) other transportation facilities, equipment, or systems, as determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 3. PUBLIC AREA SECURITY WORKING GROUP.

(a) WORKING GROUP.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall establish a working group to promote collaborative engagement between the Department of Homeland Security and public and private sector stakeholders to develop non-binding recommendations for enhancing security in public areas of transportation facilities (including facilities that are surface transportation assets), including recommendations regarding the following topics:

(1) Information sharing and interoperable communication capabilities among the Department of Homeland Security and public and private stakeholders with respect to terrorist or other threats.

(2) Coordinated incident response procedures.

(3) The prevention of terrorist attacks and other incidents through strategic planning, security training, exercises and drills, law enforcement patrols, worker vetting, and suspicious activity reporting.

(4) Infrastructure protection through effective construction design barriers and installation of advanced surveillance and other security technologies.

(b) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than one year after the establishment of the working group under subsection (a) and annually thereafter for five years, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall report to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on the working group's organization, participation, activities, findings, and non-binding recommendations for the immediately preceding 12-month period. The Secretary may publish a public version of such report that describes the working group's activities and such related matters as would be informative to the public, consistent with section 552(b) of title 5, United States Code.

(c) INAPPLICABILITY OF THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the working group established under subsection (a) or any subsidiary thereof.

SEC. 4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall—

(1) inform owners and operators of surface transportation assets about the availability of technical assistance, including vulnerability assessment tools and cybersecurity guidelines, to help protect and enhance the resilience of public areas of such assets; and

(2) subject to the availability of appropriations, provide such technical assistance to requesting owners and operators of surface transportation assets.

(b) BEST PRACTICES.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall publish on the Department of Homeland Security's website and widely disseminate, as appropriate, best practices for protecting and enhancing the resilience of public areas of transportation facilities (including facilities that are surface transportation assets), including associated frameworks or templates for implementation. Such best practices shall be updated periodically.

SEC. 5. REVIEW.

(a) REVIEW.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that includes a review of regulations, directives, policies, and procedures issued by the Administrator regarding the transportation of a firearm and ammunition, and, as appropriate, information on plans to modify any such regulation, directive, policy, or procedure based on such review.

(b) CONSULTATION.—In preparing the report required under subsection (a), the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall consult with the Aviation Security Advisory Committee (established

pursuant to section 44946 of title 49, United States Code) and appropriate public and private sector stakeholders.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5766, the Securing Public Areas of Transportation Facilities Act of 2018. This legislation will improve security coordination among transportation stakeholders by establishing a working group between the Department of Homeland Security and public and private stakeholders to develop recommendations for enhancing public area security of transportation facilities.

H.R. 5766 directs that the working group focus on key areas including information sharing, interoperable communications, incident response, and the prevention of terrorist attacks through strategic planning and security exercises. Taking steps to improve upon these critical components to security preparedness and resiliency is directly correlated to America's ability to mitigate the constantly-evolving threat to our transportation system.

The traveling public must be secure in all modes of transportation security, and the millions of Americans who utilize surface transportation networks every single day to travel to work and school rely upon strong Federal, State, local, and private sector collaboration.

Over the last several years we have seen a marked increase in attacks to public areas of transportation networks. From airports like LAX in Los Angeles, Fort Lauderdale, Istanbul, Brussels, to mass transit hubs in New York City, London, Madrid and Belgium, we have witnessed horrific scenes of attack in crowded public spaces of transportation systems.

I am glad this bill seeks to improve upon the resiliency, preparedness, and overall security infrastructure of these networks, which are absolutely crucial to our economy and the American way of life.

The free movement of people and goods across the United States must never be stymied by violent extremism. That is why it is incumbent upon those of us in Congress to ensure that Homeland Security and TSA are doing all they can to promote effective collaboration among the litany of stakeholders charged with securing the traveling public.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for his focus on this important issue. I also thank the chairman of the full committee, Mr. MCCAUL, for seeing this bill through the markup process.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 5766, the Securing Public Areas of Transportation Facilities Act of 2018.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5766 was introduced to address the growing risk of terrorist attacks in the public areas of transportation facilities.

In recent years, there has been a growing appreciation that public areas of airports and transportation facilities, where crowds tend to gather, have become soft targets for terrorists. We have seen that internationally and domestically, as there have been violent incidents in public airport areas in Brussels, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Fort Lauderdale. Last year, there was an attempted attack on New York City's transit system as well.

H.R. 5766 seeks to bolster protection for the public-facing sides of transportation systems. It does so, in part, by authorizing a working group to streamline communication and collaboration between the Department of Homeland Security and key stakeholders. Additionally, it directs DHS to disseminate technical assistance to operators such as vulnerability assessment tools and cybersecurity guidelines.

Finally, H.R. 5766 requires TSA to review its regulations, policies, and procedures regarding the transportation of firearms and ammunition and submit a comprehensive report to Congress on its findings and any planned modifications. The presence of firearms and ammunition in public areas of transportation facilities is a timely concern.

□ 1945

In January 2017, an arriving airline passenger in Fort Lauderdale retrieved a gun and ammunition from his checked bag and opened fire on travelers in the baggage claim area, killing five people and injuring six others.

In 2017 alone, TSA reported that its officers discovered 3,957 firearms at security checkpoints, 84 percent of which were loaded.

Mr. Speaker, given the prevalence and availability of guns in this country, the very least we can do is evaluate TSA's policies for transporting them and ensure that they are sensible and tailored to the risk.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my House colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Rhode Island for supporting this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5766 is an important piece of legislation that has strong support on both sides of the aisle. It is nice to see the bipartisanship once again. It directs meaningful, sensible action to help enhance the security of public-facing areas.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 5766, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, my time on the Homeland Security Committee over the past 3½ years has been a true testament to bipartisanship: trying to get the right things done, putting aside political differences to keep the country as safe and secure as we possibly can.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to support the bill of my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE). I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5766.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DHS INDUSTRIAL CONTROL SYSTEMS CAPABILITIES ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2018

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5733) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for the responsibility of the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center to maintain capabilities to identify threats to industrial control systems, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5733

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''DHS Industrial Control Systems Capabilities Enhancement Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. CAPABILITIES OF NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY AND COMMUNICATIONS INTEGRATION CENTER TO IDENTIFY THREATS TO INDUSTRIAL CONTROL SYSTEMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 227 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 148) is amended—

(1) in subsection (e)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (G), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (H), by inserting ''and'' after the semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(I) activities of the Center address the security of both information technology and operational technology, including industrial control systems;'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (f) through (m) as subsections (g) through (n), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (d) the following new subsection:

''(f) INDUSTRIAL CONTROL SYSTEMS.—The Center shall maintain capabilities to identify and address threats and vulnerabilities to products and technologies intended for use in the automated control of critical infrastructure processes. In carrying out this subsection, the Center shall—

''(1) lead, in coordination with relevant sector specific agencies, Federal Government efforts to identify and mitigate cybersecurity threats to industrial control systems, including supervisory control and data acquisition systems;

''(2) maintain cross-sector incident response capabilities to respond to industrial control system cybersecurity incidents;

''(3) provide cybersecurity technical assistance to industry end-users, product manufacturers, and other industrial control system stakeholders to identify and mitigate vulnerabilities;

''(4) collect, coordinate, and provide vulnerability information to the industrial control systems community by, as appropriate, working closely with security researchers, industry end-users, product manufacturers, and other industrial control systems stakeholders; and

''(5) conduct such other efforts and assistance as the Secretary determines appropriate.''.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 6 months thereafter during the subsequent four-year period, the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a briefing on the industrial control systems capabilities of the Center under subsection (f) of section 227 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 148), as added by subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5733, the DHS Industrial Control Systems Capabilities Enhancement Act of 2018.

Industrial control systems are the critical interface between digital controls and a physical process. These systems are ubiquitous in our modern society and are utilized in all 16 sectors of our Nation's critical infrastructure.

Whether they are used in managing the operations of electric power generators, water treatment facilities, medical devices, manufacturing facilities, or transportation networks, disruptions or damage to these systems have the potential to cause catastrophic and cascading consequences to our Nation's national security, our economic security, and our public health and safety.

The Department of Homeland Security's National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center, or NCCIC, has a key role in addressing the security of both information technology and operational technology, including the industrial control systems.

DHS, through the NCCIC, currently provides operators of industrial control systems across critical infrastructure sectors with support. They do this with malware and vulnerability analysis, incident response, and briefings on emerging threats and vulnerabilities.

H.R. 5733 codifies DHS' current role and directs them to maintain existing capabilities to identify and address threats and vulnerabilities to products and technologies intended for use in automated control of critical infrastructure processes. This legislation also supports DHS' function to secure ICS technologies by allowing NCCIC to provide cybersecurity technical assistance to ICS end users, product manufacturers, and other stakeholders to mitigate and identify vulnerabilities.

DHS operates a central hub for ICS information exchange, technical expertise, operational partnerships, and ICS-focused cybersecurity capabilities. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5733 to codify the work that DHS performs in mitigating industrial control system vulnerabilities, while ensuring that private industry has a permanent place for assistance to address cybersecurity risks.

I want to thank Chairman MCCAUL and Chairman RATCLIFFE for their support of this legislation, as well as Congressman LANGEVIN for his amendment in committee. This is a bipartisan effort.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5733, the DHS Industrial Control Systems Capabilities Enhancement Act. H.R. 5733 would codify the Department of Homeland Security's role in leading Federal efforts to secure industrial control systems.

I want to commend the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) for his hard work on this legislation. I have enjoyed collaborating with him on it, and I am grateful for his support and his support of the amendment that I offered in committee to make the act, I think, even better.

Mr. Speaker, we depend on control systems to deliver basic necessities like clean water, a steady energy supply, reliable transportation systems, and medical care.

This is not a new role for DHS, which has been working on control system security since 2004. However, enactment of H.R. 5733 will help provide clarity to DHS and its Federal partners at a critical moment in our Nation's history.

Cyber threats, Mr. Speaker, to critical infrastructure have never been greater, yet leadership from the White House is dangerously lacking. Over the past few months, we have seen top cyber officials at the White House leave, resign, or, in the case of the Cybersecurity Coordinator, have the position eliminated altogether.

What is more, the President appears to be making major foreign policy decisions with little, if any, regard for cybersecurity. The President ignored warnings from the intelligence community about Chinese telecom company ZTE when, in May, he directed the Commerce Department, by tweet, to save this habitual sanctions offender. The same month, the news broke that the Chinese Government had hacked into the networks of a U.S. Navy contractor and syphoned off sensitive military data.

This month, DHS officials reported that the North Korean Government is ramping up its cyber intrusions on critical infrastructure in the U.S. and around the world.

With respect to Russia, we know that the Kremlin has the capability to turn off the lights with a cyber intrusion, as it has done in Ukraine. We also know that Russia has been able to successfully infiltrate the networks of a wide range of U.S. critical infrastructure operators, including power plants.

DHS, through the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center, or the NCCIC, provides critical infrastructure owners and operators with valuable cyber assistance and resources to help secure their systems. The NCCIC, and specifically the Industrial Control Systems Computer Emergency Response Team, or ICS-CERT, has longstanding relationships with critical infrastructure stakeholders and the expertise to help owners and operators harden their defenses.

Expertise in operational technology, or OT, cybersecurity is even harder to come by than the more traditional information and communications technology, or ICT, space, and all of my colleagues know how much of a workforce challenge we are facing there.

Congress is wise to recognize the amazing resource we have in ICS-CERT by formally authorizing it with Mr. BACON's bill. Security solutions in the ICT space do not always map well onto operational technology, and being conversant in the nuances is essential if we are to protect the systems that we so heavily rely on.

During the committee consideration, I was also proud to offer an amendment to codify ICS-CERT's coordinated vulnerability disclosure program that ensures ICS vulnerabilities can be reported securely, promptly, and responsibly. Through this program, manufacturers are assured of a chance to patch

vulnerabilities before they are publicly announced, and security researchers are assured that their voices will be heard.

ICS-CERT is to be commended for running a progressive program that recognizes that most security researchers want to help make the internet and the scary devices that connect to it a safer place. The coordinated vulnerability program does just that by helping critical infrastructure owners and operators who receive notices from ICS-CERT about discovered vulnerabilities and effective patches before malicious actors have a chance to exploit any flaws. Mr. Speaker, this bill would empower ICS-CERT to carry out this mission fully and effectively.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again commend the gentleman for his work on this important piece of legislation. I urge my colleagues to support the measure.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I just want to say it has been a pleasure working with Mr. LANGEVIN not only on the Homeland Security Committee, but also on the Armed Services Committee. We have partnered on quite a few things, and it is wonderful to make a difference with him.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that industrial control systems are a high-value target for our adversaries. Critical infrastructure owners and operators use these systems to deliver the services that underpin our day-to-day lives, and destruction to one of those systems could have tremendous economic ramifications or could even be the difference between life and death.

We know that our adversaries—most notably Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea—have all targeted U.S. critical infrastructure and the operational technology employed across these sectors. Mr. Speaker, it is important that we solidify DHS' longstanding leadership role in securing critical infrastructure, particularly with respect to industrial control systems.

It has been a pleasure working with my colleague Mr. BACON, the gentleman from Nebraska, on this bill. I deeply appreciate both his service to the country as well as his contributions both on the Armed Services Committee and on the Homeland Security Committee. Likewise, it has been a pleasure working with him over these years.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 5733, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, first, I again want to thank my colleague from Rhode Island for his partnership on this, and his comments were absolutely right. The Russians and the Chinese are both working to be able to attack our energy grid, among other parts of our infrastructure, and we need to be prepared. And it doesn't start on day one of a war. It starts now, when we have the time to prepare.

The next December 7 will not be like Pearl Harbor with aircraft and torpedoes and bombs coming to attack our Pacific Fleet. It is going to be preceded by a cyber attack that is going to try to shut down our energy grid and other parts of our infrastructure, and the time to prepare is now. This bill starts that process, or continues that process, so that we are prepared.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5733, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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OFFICE OF BIOMETRIC IDENTITY MANAGEMENT AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2018

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5206) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Office of Biometric Identity Management, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5206

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Office of Biometric Identity Management Authorization Act of 2018'' or the ''OBIM Authorization Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF BIOMETRIC IDENTITY MANAGEMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341 et. seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 710. OFFICE OF BIOMETRIC IDENTITY MANAGEMENT.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Office of Biometric Identity Management is established within the Management Directorate of the Department.

''(b) DIRECTOR.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office of Biometric Identity Management shall be administered by the Director of the Office of Biometric Identity Management (in this section referred to as the 'Director') who shall report to the Secretary, or to another official of the Department, as the Secretary may direct.

''(2) QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES.—The Director shall—

''(A) have significant professional management experience, as well as experience in the field of biometrics and identity management;

''(B) lead the Department's biometric identity services to support anti-terrorism, counter-terrorism, border security, credentialing, national security, and public safety;

''(C) enable operational missions across the Department by receiving, matching, storing, sharing, and analyzing biometric and associated biographic and encounter data;

''(D) deliver biometric identity information and analysis capabilities to—

''(i) the Department and its components;

''(ii) appropriate Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies;

''(iii) appropriate foreign governments; and

''(iv) appropriate private sector entities;

''(E) support the law enforcement, public safety, national security, and homeland security missions of other Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies, as appropriate;

''(F) manage the operation of the Department's primary biometric repository and identification system;

''(G) manage Biometric Support Centers to provide biometric identification and verification analysis and services to the Department, appropriate Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies, appropriate foreign governments, and appropriate private sector entities;

''(H) oversee the implementation of Department-wide standards for biometric conformity, and work to make such standards Government-wide;

''(I) in coordination with the Department's Office of Policy, and in consultation with relevant component offices and headquarters offices, enter into data sharing agreements with appropriate Federal, State, local, and foreign agencies to support immigration, law enforcement, national security, and public safety missions;

''(J) maximize interoperability with other Federal, State, local, and foreign biometric systems, as appropriate;

''(K) ensure the activities of the Office of Biometric Identity Management are carried out in compliance with the policies and procedures established by the Privacy Officer appointed under section 222; and

''(L) carry out other duties and powers prescribed by law or delegated by the Secretary.

''(c) DEPUTY DIRECTOR.—There shall be in the Office of Biometric Identity Management a Deputy Director, who shall assist the Director in the management of the Office.

''(d) OTHER AUTHORITIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director may establish such other offices within the Office of Biometric Identity Management as the Director determines necessary to carry out the missions, duties, functions, and authorities of the Office.

''(2) NOTIFICATION.—If the Director exercises the authority provided by paragraph (1), the Director shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate not later than 30 days before exercising such authority.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by adding after the item relating to section 709 the following new item:

''Sec. 710. Office of Biometric Identity Management.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Terrorists, transnational criminal organizations, and others seeking to do this Nation harm are constantly coming up with new ways to cross our borders.

We used to rely on biographic information, such as names and birthdays, to identify and prevent these threats from entering our country. But the development of biometric identity-matching technology allows us to more quickly and effectively confirm people that they are who they say they are.

The use of biometric technology to positively identify individuals who seek entry into the United States is a 21st century solution to multiple homeland security problems. The technology enhances the security of our citizens, facilitates legitimate travel and trade, and bolsters the integrity of our immigration system.

My bill authorizes the Office of Biometric Identity Management, or OBIM, the primary biometric repository for DHS and other Federal agencies that are vital to our national security. OBIM operates a database of more than 225 million unique identities that include fingerprint-based biometrics, as well as face and iris holdings that allow it to provide biometric matching, storing, and sharing services across the U.S. Government.

It processes more than 300,000 daily biometric transactions, reviewing more than 360 known or suspected terrorist records for resolution on a daily basis.

OBIM also supports DHS's efforts to complete a biometric exit program. Putting this biometric exit system in place is, as the 9/11 Commission noted, ''an essential investment in our national security.'' More than 15 years later, large numbers of foreign nationals continue to overstay their visas or disappear into the United States, just as four of the 9/11 hijackers did.

Congress has passed multiple laws since 2004 mandating the creation of the biometric exit system, though we are still waiting for it to come to fruition.

OBIM is responsible for a key element of our national security, but has not been authorized by statute. This bill, the Office of Biometric Identity Management Authorization Act of 2018, will finally codify this into law.

In the current high-risk threat environment, it is vital that we place greater emphasis on biometric identity technology as a counterterrorism tool and provide OBIM with the resources necessary to further protect the homeland in the face of an evolving threat.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5206, the OBIM Authorization Act of 2018.

First, I want to begin by commending the gentlewoman from Arizona for sponsoring this piece of legislation. It is very thoughtful and certainly very timely.

Of course, I am not surprised that she would come up with such a great idea, knowing that she originally hails from Rhode Island and comes from great roots. So I am not surprised that she would come up with a great idea like this.

Mr. Speaker, for the past decade, the Department of Homeland Security has collected biometric data from foreign nationals and U.S. citizens for a wide range of purposes, including counterterrorism, border security, credentialing, national security, and public safety.

Over that time, the Office of Biometric Identity Management, or OBIM, has become a repository for more than 240 million biometrics, such as fingerprints and photographs collected by DHS. OBIM is charged with analyzing biometric data, sending updates to critical terror watch lists, and sharing information with trusted partners inside and outside the Federal Government to support law enforcement, public safety, national security, and homeland security.

Given the sensitivity of this type of biometric data and its increasing integration into security programs, I am pleased that H.R. 5206 requires this office to comply with privacy policies and procedures established by the DHS privacy officer.

This is a good bipartisan bill.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5206 authorizes the department's existing Office of Biometric Identity Management, which is charged with collecting and using biometric data to enhance DHS's counterterrorism, border security, and national security operations.

Increasingly, Federal agencies see the value of adopting biometrics as an additional security measure. As more and more Federal programs make use of such personal data, it is absolutely vital that privacy be baked in from the start. Importantly, H.R. 5206 requires a privacy-forward approach to all that OBIM does.

For these reasons, I support this measure. This is a good, bipartisan bill, and, again, I commend the gentlewoman from Rhode Island, who is now from Arizona, for sponsoring this bill and getting it through committee.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill as well, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my colleague from Rhode Island's support on this bill and our longstanding relationship that we had since we grew up in a similar neighborhood before I fell in love with Arizona and never wanted to see another winter again. But anyway, I digress.

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5206, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

IMMIGRATION ADVISORY PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2018

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5207) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the immigration advisory program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5207

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Immigration Advisory Program Authorization Act of 2018'' or the ''IAP Authorization Act of 2018''.

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF THE IMMIGRATION ADVISORY PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 211 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 419. IMMIGRATION ADVISORY PROGRAM.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized within U.S. Customs and Border Protection an immigration advisory program (in this section referred to as the 'program') for U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers, pursuant to an agreement with a host country, to assist air carriers and security employees at foreign airports with review of traveler information during the processing of flights bound for the United States.

''(b) ACTIVITIES.—In carrying out the program, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers may—

''(1) be present during processing of flights bound for the United States;

''(2) assist air carriers and security employees with document examination and traveler security assessments;

''(3) provide relevant training to air carriers, security employees, and host-country authorities;

''(4) analyze electronic passenger information and passenger reservation data to identify potential threats;

''(5) engage air carriers and travelers to confirm potential terrorist watchlist matches;

''(6) make recommendations to air carriers to deny potentially inadmissable passengers

boarding flights bound for the United States; and

''(7) conduct other activities to secure flights bound for the United States, as directed by the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

''(c) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 60 days before an agreement with the government of a host country pursuant to the program described in this section enters into force, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall provide the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate with—

''(1) a copy of such agreement, which shall include—

''(A) the identification of the host country with which U.S. Customs and Border Protection intends to enter into such agreement;

''(B) the location at which activities described in subsection (b) will be conducted pursuant to such agreement; and

''(C) the terms and conditions for U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel operating at such location;

''(2) country-specific information on the anticipated homeland security benefits associated with such agreement;

''(3) an assessment of the impacts such agreement will have on U.S. Customs and Border Protection domestic port of entry staffing;

''(4) information on the anticipated costs over the five fiscal years after such agreement enters into force associated with carrying out such agreement;

''(5) details on information sharing mechanisms to ensure that U.S. Customs and Border Protection has current information to prevent terrorist and criminal travel; and

''(6) other factors that the Commissioner determines necessary for Congress to comprehensively assess the appropriateness of carrying out the program.

''(d) AMENDMENT OF EXISTING AGREEMENTS.—Not later than 30 days before a substantially amended program agreement with the government of a host country in effect as of the date of the enactment of this section enters into force, the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate—

''(1) a copy of such agreement, as amended; and

''(2) the justification for such amendment.

''(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms 'air carrier' and 'foreign air carrier' have the meanings given such terms in section 40102 of title 49, United States Code.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (c) of section 411 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 211) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (18), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (19) as paragraph (20); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (18) the following new paragraph:

''(19) carry out section 419, relating to the immigration advisory program; and''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 418 the following new item:

''Sec. 419. Immigration advisory program.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, a major part of keeping the homeland safe is making sure we prevent bad actors from ever reaching our shores. In order to do this, we must continue to push out our borders with programs that utilize a combination of vetting and interviews conducted by experienced law enforcement agents.

The Customs and Border Protection Immigration Advisory Program, or IAP, accomplishes just that. The IAP program deploys specially trained CBP officers to major last-point-of-departure airports that offer direct flights to the United States. It is the responsibility of these officers to recommend that airlines do not allow foreign nationals who would be deemed inadmissible upon arrival or present a significant security threat to board an airplane bound for the United States.

This program enhances our national security by preventing high-risk individuals from boarding an airplane bound for our homeland. In fiscal year 2017, there were a total of 4,328 no-board recommendations made across 12 different IAP airport locations. IAP is especially important in countries with significant terrorist screening database hits.

The IAP program is not currently authorized by statute, but H.R. 5207, the Immigration Advisory Program Authorization Act of 2018, will finally codify this important safety and security program into law. I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to please join me in supporting this commonsense legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5207, the Immigration Advisory Program Authorization Act of 2018.

H.R. 5207 authorizes an important function within U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Immigration Advisory Program, or IAP. Under this program, CBP deploys officers to overseas airports to advise law enforcement partners about certain passengers before they board U.S.-bound flights. This important program seeks to essentially push out our borders to prevent travelers who may pose a threat to the U.S. from ever boarding an inbound flight.

Importantly, beyond simply authorizing the program, the bill requires CBP to notify Congress whenever a new agreement is put in place with a foreign partner. It also requires CBP to assess how the overseas deployment of officers may affect officer coverage at U.S. ports of entry.

While I certainly appreciate the sacrifice made by officers serving abroad, I would note that this authorization is coming at a time when CBP has acknowledged that it is currently 4,000 officers short of what it needs to carry out current operations, both domestically and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, there is continued bipartisan support for CBP to push out our borders to prevent individuals who pose a threat to the U.S. from making their way here to our country. H.R. 5207 authorizes an existing DHS program that has proven helpful to our foreign partners in carrying out our shared interest of preventing terrorism, and it reduces the burden of deporting individuals who would be denied entry into the U.S. upon landing here.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentlewoman for sponsoring the bill. I support it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Rhode Island for his support on this bipartisan legislation. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5207, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONGRATULATING THE ALLEGHANY LADY TROJANS ON THEIR STATE SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Alleghany Lady Trojans softball team on winning North Carolina's A1 State championship.

These young women deserve the championship for their hard work and talent, but they are also champions of humility, giving gratitude to God, their parents, coaches, and the community fan base that supported them throughout their season.

Alleghany has a unique softball history, last winning State in 1996 as three-peat champions. Six of this year's team are related to past champions, which shows the passion and drive passed down from generation to generation.

Even Coach Weaver is a former State MVP, striving to instill in her team the determination and confidence that she developed as a high school athlete.

Congratulations to the Lady Trojans and the community that shares in this

victory. It is an honor and a blessing to represent such a great community.

□ 2015

OFFICER NORBERT—HOUSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the rain came down, the bayous and creeks rose, and the wind blew. It was as if it would never stop raining. It was Hurricane Harvey last September. After it was over, 55 inches of water had hammered the Houston area.

But in the rainy haze, Officer Norbert Ramon appeared. But Officer Ramon, a 55-year-old officer of the Houston Police Department, was sick. He had stage IV colon cancer. He was undergoing treatment, and doctors said that he had only a few years to live.

However, the 24-year veteran of the Houston Police Department jumped into the flooded aftermath of the hurricane despite his cancer. Officer Ramon sloshed through bacteria-filled waters, putting his own life at risk.

Over the course of 4 days, he rescued 1,500 Houstonians stranded in the flood. He said: ''My main concern was to help the citizens. Nothing else was on my mind. I didn't worry about me or anything.''

As the waters receded and the Texas Sun came out through the blue sky, Mr. Speaker, Officer Ramon headed back to the hospital, returning to his treatments. Despite a hard-fought battle, Officer Ramon lost his fight against a cancerous invader.

Taps sounded today, Mr. Speaker, as hundreds of peace officers and citizens of Houston honored the life of one of Houston's finest.

Officer Norbert Ramon stood Houston strong. Mr. Speaker, they don't make 'em like him anymore.

And that is just the way it is.

AUSTIN HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize the selfless work that the Austin Habitat for Humanity is doing in the 25th District of Texas that I proudly represent.

Over the past 30 years, they have built more than 425 homes, repaired another 280, and provided financial advice to over 10,000 Texans. Just last month, I had the opportunity to visit this organization and meet with the great folks who operate it. The work they do here is so important, and I was inspired by their spirits and selfless attitudes.

Hearing about the remarkable work they do day in and day out was extraordinary. They put God's love into action by bringing people together to build homes and communities and to give hope to those who need it the most.

Those who work and volunteer for Habitat for Humanity are superb people. They are compassionate and kind, and, frankly, we need more Americans just like them.

Every single person deserves a decent and affordable place to live, and this organization is there to help those who are less fortunate. I encourage each and every person listening to get out there and do something for your local community. Together, we can really make this world a better place.

With that being said, God bless Texas, God bless Habitat for Humanity, and God bless the United States of America.

''In God We Trust.''

SUPPORT ACTIVE-DUTY PURPLE HEART RECIPIENTS

(Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act that just unanimously passed the House. I was proud to support it.

This bill recognizes the sacrificial service of the 7,000-plus servicemen and -women who received a Purple Heart after being wounded in battle and continue to serve on Active Duty. My bill, included in this passage, takes the rightful step to waive the funding fee on all VA home loans for Active-Duty Purple Heart recipients. With this bill, we will save servicemembers thousands of dollars and help their families achieve the dream of homeownership.

U.S. Marine Corps Major Byron Owen, who was wounded twice in Iraq and once in Afghanistan, explained it best when he shared his experiences with my office. He said: ''I was medevaced out of Iraq in 2006 and had to undergo months of therapy to return to service. Why should I have to pay 20 grand to get a VA loan when someone with a noncombat-related disability gets to waive it? Some of my friends are amputees still serving in uniform. They're paying the funding fee. Does that seem right?''

Major Owen, I hear you—and, no, it is not right. That is why I am proud to have introduced this bill and voted with my colleagues to support Active-Duty Purple Heart recipients with the passage of H.R. 299.

CONGRATULATING PENNSYLVANIA CONGRESS OF THE FUTURE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ATTENDEES

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two high school honors students from Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District chosen to represent the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as delegates at the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders.

The following students were selected to attend the event, which will take place June 29 to July 1 in Lowell, Massachusetts: Jacob Hulse of Tidioute and Brett Kelly of Lewis Run. These outstanding students were required to achieve a 3.5 GPA to be nominated for this prestigious honors-only program by their teachers or the National Academy of Future Science and Technology Leaders.

The event aims to encourage and guide the top students in our country who wish to devote their lives to the sciences and technology. Chosen delegates represent all 50 States and Puerto Rico.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Jacob and Brett on this tremendous accomplishment, and I wish them the best of luck as they continue their career paths to be future leaders in the science and technology field.

WHAT HAPPENED TO FAMILY VALUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. EVANS) is recognized for half of the remaining time until 10 p.m. as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for allowing me to lead this critical Special Order to speak about the lack of family values demonstrated by the Trump administration and the GOP, their choice to mismanage, and to offer a counternarrative to the wayward path they are leading us down.

Black people have no permanent friends or permanent enemies or permanent interests, as so eloquently stated by former Congressman William Lacy Clay, Sr.

Mr. Speaker, the President asked Black Americans: What do you have to lose?

The Congressional Black Caucus responded with a document that was hand-delivered to him that is titled, ''We Have a Lot to Lose.''

Over the course of the 2016 Presidential election, time and time again, then-candidate Donald Trump asked the Black community a larger question: ''What do you have to lose?''

The inquiry presupposes that the experience of all African Americans is destitute and that we live in fear. In fact, President Trump declared some African Americans' communities are

worse than war zones, demonstrating a lack of understanding of both constituencies.

The election has come and gone, and the time for the campaign calls is over. Now President Trump represents all Americans and must govern this Nation for the good of all Americans, whether they are Black or White, rich or poor, conservative or liberal.

So as the conscience of the Congress, the voice of the 78 million Americans and 17 million African Americans, the Congressional Black Caucus is obligated to answer President Trump's questions.

The answer: The African Americans have a great deal to lose under the Trump administration, and we have already lost a lot.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our chairman, Chairman RICHMOND, for allowing me this opportunity to conduct this Special Order.

Over the next hour, we will speak about some of the issues that have faced the Congressional Black Caucus and Black people in this Nation. I say that to you because of this document I have in my hand, ''We Have a Lot to Lose.'' In this document that was presented to the President of the United States, it outlines those various issues.

What are we losing?

Based on last week's passage of the farm bill here in the House, we have lost benefits under the SNAP program. Thank God for the Senate, Mr. Speaker, because the Senate has passed a different version. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that that version will be the version that becomes the law of this land.

The Senate passed a version 20–1 out of committee, and they will bring that up for a vote because, Mr. Speaker, I believe that represents better the views and values of Members of this body. I do not believe the version that we passed in the farm bill represents this body.

I am disappointed that the GOP leadership had the unmitigated gall to bring this highly partisan and warped bill to the House floor for a second vote, posing as a farm bill. Nothing changed in the bill since the last time it came to the floor, so you have to wonder what was offered or said to those Members who voted ''no'' just a month ago to change their votes.

The partisan approach of the majority has produced a bill that will hurt thousands of people in the city of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Agriculture Committee, I submitted letters from the mayor of the city of Philadelphia. In that letter, the mayor of the city of Philadelphia laid out specifically the impact that that particular bill that came out of the House Agriculture Committee would have on the people of the city of Philadelphia. You are talking about affecting over 200,000 to 300,000 people in the city of Philadelphia.

In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1.8 million people can be affected. In Montgomery County, in the county I represent, 50,000 people are affected.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that that bill that passed this House by only two votes was misguided and was heading in the wrong direction.

It is also clear, Mr. Speaker, that people who are on SNAP do not fight to be on SNAP. They understand clearly about the challenges that they face.

Forty-two million Americans are on SNAP. No, Mr. Speaker, those people are not fearful of work. They understand if there is a great opportunity available for them, they would take advantage of the opportunity.

I think it is clear to me, Mr. Speaker, that, again, this administration and the GOP were lacking some sense of connection to what people's values are. As a result, you saw that vote that took place last week. It again sends us in the wrong direction. It raises serious questions about the lack of family values from a party that is always talking about family values; but now, all of a sudden, Mr. Speaker, it seems like family values have gone out the window. Under this version of the farm bill, people will go hungry in my city and around the Nation.

As the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities notes, the House bill breaks with the long history of bipartisan efforts to improve and reform SNAP. It is clear, Mr. Speaker, there were 23 hearings on the issue of SNAP, and not one single time in the 23 hearings did they suggest that there should be a different direction in terms of SNAP.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats are for work. We are very clear. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus understand the importance of work. We know what it means to work. But to me, Mr. Speaker, that was a wrong-headed policy in terms of the farm bill. It did not justify that action, and it should not have even gone anywhere.

But as usual, Mr. Speaker, some people don't realize the election is over. We need to work together—Democrat, Republican, conservative, liberal, whoever it may be—because hunger is a problem, Mr. Speaker. It is not a problem just in certain communities; it is a problem across this Nation.

In spite of the employment numbers and in spite of what is told to us about the economy, there are a lot of people who are hungry. There are a lot of people who are left out of the process. This is not something that we should take lightly.

□ 2030

This is something that we would recognize and something we should work together on.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to you today that it is clear to me that the Republicans and the Trump administration have gone in the wrong direction. When you talk about the issue of families and what needs to take place, this is not about family values.

I stress to you, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, millions of Americans who receive SNAP are consumers and are important parts of the economy who our farmers and ranchers depend on as a part of our farm and food economy.

Mr. Speaker, I have consistently said that food is medicine. Food is medicine and food policy is foreign policy. It is not something we should take lightly.

So today, the Congressional Black Caucus is going to talk about the importance of values, and particularly family values, and how all of a sudden there is amnesia when it comes down to the question of values.

We are saying to you today, Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that people understand that the 42 million people who are on SNAP across this Nation are of all colors, of all races. It can happen to any of us. It is not something that we should sit back and all of a sudden think that this couldn't happen to anyone. This could happen to our brothers and our sisters. And we are our brother's and sister's keeper. It is not something that we should just willy-nilly suddenly say to ourselves that we shouldn't worry about. Yet, the GOP not only failed them, they failed America last week.

In addition, healthcare is one of the most important issues for our country, as seen by the mass rejection of the efforts by the GOP to repeal the Affordable Care Act last year.

Think about this, Mr. Speaker. Healthcare. Everybody has the right to a healthy life, regardless of age, race, gender, or preexisting condition. Medical issues are personal matters. Whether it affects physical or mental health, it should not result in financial ruin. We all should know and recognize that it is clear that any of us can have a health episode. No one is above it. It is something that we should not take lightly.

Mr. Speaker, we as the Congressional Black Caucus know and understand. And that is why we have fought so hard for healthcare. We have stressed over and over again that this, too, can happen to you.

We understand that, with preexisting conditions and the challenges that we have in our community of high blood pressure, diabetes, and other types of diseases, this is something we should address. We should make sure that people know and can take advantage of a healthcare system that is open and available. We should not be bankrupting people, Mr. Speaker, on the issue of healthcare.

Mr. Speaker, when the President and the GOP talk about family values, they seem to forget that when it comes down to the question of healthcare, that is something that we all should be ensuring everybody has. That is not a Democrat or Republican issue. That is an American issue. That is something right up there that we all should recognize that healthcare should be available to everyone. When we look at it and think about it, this is something we have to work for.

There is no simple answer to dealing with the question of healthcare, but we do believe the Affordable Care Act is a great foundation. We believe that the Affordable Care Act basically laid a tone and a foundation for this entire country.

As we all know, we have healthcare here in this House, in the United States Senate, and the President of the United States has healthcare. And that is provided for by the taxpayers of this country.

So it is not something we should take lightly. It is something that we should all understand that health issues can affect us all. When you really think about it, in terms of getting a job, how can you do that if you are not healthy? How can you take care of your family if you are not healthy? How can you do anything if you are not healthy?

This is something we believe is a family value and this is something that we all have said over and again. I believe healthcare is a fundamental right and not a privilege. No one should ever be afraid that taking care of their physical or mental health will cause financial hardship or be inaccessible to them for any reason.

I want to repeat that again, Mr. Speaker. I believe that healthcare is a fundamental right and not a privilege. No one should ever be afraid that taking care of their physical or mental health will cause financial hardship or be inaccessible to them for any reason at all. We need to think about that. We need to carefully think about exactly what that means.

When we talk about it in this day and age of family values, what is more important to a family than the health of the breadwinner, male or female? What is important to someone who is looking for an opportunity and they are prepared to go on that job?

It is very important, Mr. Speaker, that under the Affordable Care Act it allowed people to stay on their parent's healthcare until age 26. Also, the part about preexisting conditions. Don't take that lightly, Mr. Speaker. That is something that we all could be affected by.

It seems to me that over and over again in this House we seem to neglect to think about the conditions that we all face. Mr. Speaker, in healthcare, we have those moments where it can be with anyone and any condition they could be under. It is something that we should really understand and recognize. It is something that we shouldn't take lightly.

Healthcare is, to me, the most essential issue we face today. It is something that we all should be fighting for, no matter what party we come from, no matter what part of the country we come from. We should all understand what it means.

I will continue to be a voice for the voiceless to ensure adequate healthcare for all. That is something I believe is extremely essential, Mr. Speaker.

When I thought about giving these words, I basically said, again, we are going to speak about the lack of family values demonstrated by the Trump administration. The Trump administration and the GOP talk about family values a lot. How can you talk about family values when you want to eliminate the SNAP program? How can you talk about family values when you want to reduce people's healthcare?

You can't talk about family values when, in the very same breath, you are talking about destroying people's healthcare and access to food. There is something fundamentally wrong with that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stress to you today that this is not a partisan issue. Feeding people and healthcare is not Democrat or Republican. It is not conservative or liberal. It is something that we all need to be concerned with. If we are talking about moving America forward, then we will move it forward when we bring others along. I stress this is something that we all should be concerned with.

Turning to more hypocrisy from the party of family values, the Trump administration's unilateral decision to separate migrant children from their parents at the Southern border is just the latest example of the majority party refusing to practice what it preaches.

Just think abut it. Migrant children. Migrant children. Migrant children. I said that four times. I said that four times because I think it hasn't gotten through.

When you talk about separating children from their families, there is something wrong with that, Mr. Speaker. When you talk about using that for a political purpose and you talk about using them as an example of children and families, there is something wrong with that, Mr. Speaker. That is not the kind of America we want. We do not want an America where we are going to separate children and families. Children and families should be united. We should bring them together.

Mr. Speaker, when we hear the statement that Democrats want to basically just let anybody in the country, we know that is just for political rhetoric. Remember, I said earlier, going back to when we passed this book out that says we have a lot to lose, we said, Mr. Speaker, in the very beginning of this book, that the election is over.

I understand in 132 days there will be an election. Well, let the election speak for itself, Mr. Speaker. Let the results speak for themselves.

But there is no way you can talk about separating families. There is no way you can talk about separating children. There is no way that 2,300 to 2,500 children who are spread wherever they maybe, that is not the kind of America we want. That is not family values.

So if you talk about reducing SNAP and you talk about reducing healthcare and you talk about separating families, there is something wrong with that, Mr. Speaker. There is something wrong when we are now at a point where we are separating families.

Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of Members who have gone to the various borders and seen for themselves firsthand what is taking place. This is not the kind of America we want.

For a party that professes to understand the importance of advancing policies that promote family values, we now have a preponderance of evidence to the contrary.

I just ticked them off: SNAP, healthcare, and now separating families. If you take those three areas, there is something wrong with the context of talking about family values.

It is clearly that whether it is an excessive punitive immigration policy, changes to the free lunch program eligibility, proposals to cut Supplemental Security Income, or the refusal to adopt comprehensive criminal justice reform, the Republican policy agenda deliberately targets families, especially those in underserved communities of color.

Mr. Speaker, we are, in my view, in a very challenging time. We are probably, in my lifetime, in the most challenging time I have ever seen. This requires a different kind of leadership. It requires a leadership that puts America first. And in order to put America first, that means we must work together. We must work together on a farm bill that is bipartisan and that doesn't reduce SNAP. We must work to ensure healthcare is available. And we must be clear, Mr. Speaker, that we have an opportunity to make these things happen.

So I stress to you with the things that I have just stressed, that clearly we have got a chance to do something about these things. These problems persist even in the wake of the administration's immigration policy reversal and the so-called executive order.

Several members of the CBC have expressed concerns about the Republicans' inability to devise a coherent reunification plan for the children and parents separated by the President's misguided policy.

An American crisis is happening right now in front of us. Children, from the toddlers at the border to Dreamers losing DACA to American-born children of immigrant parents, have become the victims of Trump's America.

Let me repeat that. An American crisis is happening right now in front of us. Children, from the toddlers at the border to Dreamers losing DACA to American-born children of immigrant parents, children have become victims in Trump's America. This is not what should be happening in America.

Mr. Speaker, yes, we have our challenges, but the fact of the matter is that we need to work together. So as a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, I stand here, Mr. Speaker, saying to you that the Congressional

Black Caucus is ready to work together to make a difference.

The practice of punishing parents who are trying to save their children's lives and punishing children for being brought to safety by their parents by separating them is fundamentally cruel and un-America. That should not be accepted, Mr. Speaker.

For this next hour, we, as members of the Congressional Black Caucus, are standing up to shine light on this situation.

We are determined to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that people understand that this should no longer be acceptable; we should not continue to pit this section against that section; and that we all understand, when it is all said and done, that we are in this together. Although, as Dr. King said, we may have come over on different boats, we are in the same boat now. That is called America—an America that is inclusive.

The Department of Homeland Security denied that they were breaking the sacred bond between parents and children until The New York Times reported that more than 700 children have been separated from their moms and their dads since October.

Family unity is recognized as a fundamental human right enshrined in international law. The Trump administration's proposed action to separate immigrant families flies in the face of this law. It must stop. It must stop, Mr. Speaker. The practice of separating children from parents as a deterrent to seeking asylum is inhumane and cruel. Seeking asylum is not illegal. In fact, it is written into U.S. immigration law to ensure that those with a credible fear of persecution that they can present their case.

□ 2045

The American Academy of Pediatrics opposed DHS's proposal that would separate mothers from their children arriving at the border, saying that, in a time of anxiety and stress, children need to be with their parents, family members, and caregivers.

I stand here tonight, on the 6-month anniversary of the tax bill. But before I speak on that, I have a colleague of mine from the great State of Texas. She has been in the forefront. I have watched her in the short period of time I have been here. When she speaks, there are many who listen to her.

She is relentless. I have watched her be relentless, driven, purposeful, and focused. She is the great lady from the State of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania. There is no one to whom he can take a back seat in terms of his freshman term for his engagement and involvement. He has made the most eloquent statements on the floor, which show his commitment to the people of this Nation and the people of his district.

Tonight is certainly an example of that, as we have come to the floor to, really, speak about children. I hope that my friends and my colleagues will fully appreciate the fact that, as we speak about children, we are speaking about everyone's children.

We are speaking about a young boy who was killed running away from law enforcement—not running toward, not creating a threat.

We are thinking about children who need a better education or children who need to have a supplemental nutrition program or children who need to be safe from human trafficking. We are talking about children.

Mr. Speaker, a week ago Monday and Sunday, I was in McAllen and Brownsville. I was in the detention centers with the tinsel, silver-like blankets. I was in the cage-like atmosphere where human beings were kept, human beings, of course, who had fled their country and had come across the border.

Some might make the point that they came across illegally, but they came across and presented themselves to officials. Heretofore, that action was not a criminal action.

I saw those individuals. I saw the most potent memory of what is wrong about what we are doing: mothers who were crying their hearts out for having not been able to see their children, with stories that would break your heart, stories where you were told to go into court, your children could not go with you, and you came back and your children were gone.

What father, what mother could even live with themselves, knowing their child had been snatched with no information and in a—how should I say it?—deceiving manner, not a manner where you could sit and explain to Jose or Maria or little Roger, whom I held in my hands, 9 months old, fleeing with his sister because his mother is deceased.

What do you think that sister feels? Her mother is deceased, and the 9-month-old that she was bringing, her mother's baby, is taken away from her. And Roger cannot speak. One-year-old Leah cannot speak. None of them can speak, and they have been taken away.

How dastardly, how insensitive our government appears to be. A Nation founded upon the values of humanity, freedom of religion and speech and due process. We all know the law provides anyone within our boundaries the right to due process.

But, no. We are, in fact, doing what Bishop Daniel E. Flores of the diocese of Brownsville said: We are acting, by separating immigrant parents and children as a deterrent, on a cruel and reprehensible policy.

Reverend Bishop Michael Curry said: For Christians, Jesus of Nazareth is a standard of conduct for your life. He tells us to love God and to love thy neighbor.

I would say almost every religion speaks about love, speaks about family—not in the way that the United States Attorney General used and abused the New Testament, by citing Roman 13, to submit to rulers, to justify the child separation policy, before he was completely undermined and embarrassed by a fake executive order that was signed by the President of the United States.

I say that because that term has become part of our language. I have never used it before, but it was an appropriate description of an executive order that will last for only 20 days and will not have any answer for us going forward.

We don't have any legislation. Our legislation to solve this problem introduced by Mr. NADLER and the Judiciary Committee Democrats and all of us, welcoming anyone else who would like to sign, would get to the immediate concern of not having a separation of these children and, also, ending the zero-tolerance program, which has created this unjust situation.

Let me indicate to you that all of the medical professionals, including Alicia Lieberman with the Early Trauma Treatment Network at the University of California said: Decades of studies show early separations can cause permanent emotional damage. ''Children are biologically programmed to grow best in the care of a parent figure.''

Members who have visited have said they walked into rooms with 300 children, and they were absolutely silent. They were frightened. Toddlers.

Who among us who have had toddlers in their home, from our own children to those of us fortunate enough to have grandbabies, like mine—like Roy III and Ellison—have ever seem them sit still?

These children were in total fear and apprehension. This is what we are creating. This is not the America we love.

It is noted that the activity in the children's brains was much lower than expected. If you think of a brain as a light bulb, it is as though there was a dimmer that has reduced them from a 100-watt bulb to a 30-watt bulb.

This is what happens. Children who have been separated from their parents, in their first 2 years like little Roger, who is 9 months old, their IQ may go down.

So we are on the floor today, and I am glad to be with Chairman RICHMOND of the Congressional Black Caucus. We believe in speaking out on the issues that impact all of humanity. And this is the sin that we are in the midst of.

Do you realize that the only numbers that these children and parents are getting are the aid numbers? Someone says there is a number at Health and Human Services. None of us have seen it.

I am demanding a full inventory of every single child that we allege that we have who was separated and snatched from their family members, who are in foster care or some detention center, as well as the 10,000 unaccompanied children.

Mr. Speaker, do you realize that I have been here long enough that I was down on the border 4 years ago when the massive numbers of unaccompanied children came to the United States? Then, we put these boys and girls, as unaccompanied children, in this vast industry of foster care and centers. They are still there.

Can anyone who believes in a higher power want to accept that? Even as clean as these places may be, Mr. Speaker, do you know that these caretakers working in these nonprofits, that they cannot touch the children? They cannot hold the children. They cannot comfort a crying toddler. They are told not to touch these children.

Do you realize that we are in one of the worst, or largest, refugee crises in the world. That is why we are receiving these people. It is going up 67 percent all over the world because people are fleeing devastation and crises in their countries. That is what is happening in Honduras, with the largest number of murders in the world. El Salvador. Guatemala has a million people displaced.

Yet, our government would suggest that they cannot seek asylum for domestic violence or gangs or fleeing a place that has volcano ash that has displaced a million people in a small country? Where is our mercy?

That is why we are on the floor today. We are on the floor today because of, as I indicated, the horrible, horrific impact on children.

''Reuniting and Detaining Migrant Families Pose New Mental Health Risks,'' says The New York Times.

I want to just add these points to your discussion that we have faced.

Some of these children, Mr. Speaker, are in foster care. We know that there are American children in foster care. We know that there are families who are trying to get back on their feet. They want their children. There is a love for those children. But they have had to be moved out.

The worst thing—I have had these calls to my office—is a mother's parental rights to be extinguished unfairly when she was trying to get herself together, maybe economically, maybe trying to get off drugs. We feel the pain of that mother, that American mother.

How would you like to be a Guatemalan mother—this happened in 2012—who was arrested on immigration charges and lost custody of her son, who was then adopted by a Missouri couple over her objection. The judge who initially terminated the mother's parental rights found that, should she be deported, the chance that she might try to return to get her child would render her an unfit parent.

I feel like I am in a nightmare. Your child is snatched away from you at the border. They go into foster care. Some good-intending people—I don't want to condemn the adoptive parents, good-intending people.

I don't know who gave them the authority that this was an available child. These children are in foster care around the Nation. They are everywhere. We don't know which way they are, to be honest with you.

They get in foster care and some—maybe I'll say—well-intentioned foster care notifies someone and said: ''We have a child for you to adopt.'' And your rights are quashed.

I am feeling pain right now. I can't even imagine it: I have fallen upon hard times. My State children's protective services takes my child. I make a commitment to get my life back together, and my child is lost to me forever.

This is an amazing scenario that we are in. I want to read this last thing and then speak very quickly about our family values.

This is from an immigrant mother: My child was snatched from me and separated from me one day after I was arrested.

Again, I want to end the arrests, the zero tolerance. They are presenting themselves for asylum. They should have the right to go through the legal process. Then they should have the right to counsel, due process. And they should have the right to be able to be released.

Now, there will be a great deal of ire and humor for some on this point. That is because they don't understand. We had a case management program that was 90-plus percent positive on the return of those individuals, those families, for their court date. This administration defunded it.

It was a case management program. They followed those families, put them on the electronic bracelet, and they returned. They did not escape. They did not remain in the United States without coming to court and getting a determination.

So this mother was separated. This is a court case, thank goodness, that was filed on June 22: ''I have been able to speak to my child only three times and only for approximately 5 minutes each time since we were separated. My son isn't able to give me much information about his circumstances because he is too young and too upset to understand what is happening.''

She doesn't know where he is. He doesn't know where she is.

''Every time we talk, he only wants to know when he will see me again, so it is hard for him to focus on anything else.''

Just like I said, we are diminishing his capacity. We are creating a situation of undermining his intellectual growth, his psychological growth, all of this.

''There have been a few times he said that he had a nosebleed. I told him to tell someone if he is feeling sick, but he is too scared to tell anyone.''

That is why you went into a room of toddlers and nobody was moving. Nobody was moving. No toddler was even moving.

''He says that he is scared to report any type of mistreatment or health issue because the other children have told him that children who report things get sent to another place.''

I have legislation that I am introducing, and I hope my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, will extend the temporary protected status for Salvadorans, Hondurans, and, as well, Guatemalans. We want to give them TPS on the basis of the volcano.

□ 2100

Why? Because this administration has ended it. It will end in 2019. These people are fleeing violence, and you will be sending those here who are working, contributing, and paying taxes—before we can try to regularize or find a way for them to access status—you will be sending them back to murderous countries in the largest crisis of refugee movement in the history of our time. You will be sending them back. Where is our mercy?

Then you want to add to that the fact that we have an administration and a Congress that is making changes to school free lunches. These are for our children already here.

Making eligibility proposed cuts to Supplemental Security Income, SSI, many children, that is their lifeline. If something happens to their parent, they have SSI.

The refusal to adopt comprehensive criminal justice reform, I am a steadfast supporter of good law enforcement. They are part of the legal and law and order structure, but they are also part of the human rights and civil rights structure of this Nation. It is important that we have the collegiality, the comity, the communications, and the friendship, actually, between police and community.

It is difficult when there are mothers who are African Americans who believe that their Black boys are more apt to be shot by law enforcement, as a young man was just shot a few days ago in Pennsylvania. This is not a condemnation of law enforcement. It is to work to make the system better and to save lives.

So we are interested in criminal justice reform. But, of course, that is not moving in the direction we would like. I would like it to be moving in a nonpartisan manner to save lives.

The GOP chose to cut $150 billion over a decade from various safety net programs: Medicare; cash assistance programs, like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; again, as I said, SSI; and healthcare.

Republicans are suing the government to eliminate the preexisting condition requirement for insurance carriers. I am almost speechless. I cannot believe that. I was here for the Affordable Care Act. We laid ourselves on the line to fight for all of those who came to us in hearings, pleading: I have asthma. I have acne. I am pregnant. I have diabetes. I have sickle cell. And I have not been able to get insurance.

Here we are taking away that lifeline that was a valuable asset to the healthcare of the American people.

The farm bill, cutting $23 billion that resulted in 400,000 households losing SNAP—our children, here in the United States—the supplemental nutrition program, thousands of children losing reduced meals.

Do you know, right now, Mr. Speaker, out of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, my Houston parks department is serving three meals a day to children who would not eat but for this program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture—three meals a day to hungry children. There is hunger in America, but we are making it worse.

What about the $1.9 trillion tax cut? Do you realize that I go around in my community and beyond and people ask me: ''What happened with the tax cut?'' They don't have any impact from the tax cut. There is no increase in wages. Bonuses are not anything that anybody remembers because only a few people got them. This is the pay-more-for-less tax cut, massive tax cuts and a lot of money going to individuals who already have money. This is Robin Hood in reverse.

This bill is unprecedented and breathtaking in its audacity. It is making rich people richer. It is a scheme. And by taking insurance away from 24 million people, raising costs for the poor and middle class, these are questions of whether family values exist in this Nation.

As Judge Learned Hand observed: ''If we are to keep our democracy, there must be one commandment: Thou shalt not ration justice.''

So I would ask that my colleagues join me, as I asked in the Women's Caucus hearing just a few minutes ago, that we secure a count of every single child held in captivity. That means an immigrant child who was snatched away from their family or an unaccompanied child. There are thousands. Where are they?

I would also ask that Members be aware that these facilities are being brought into our districts with no notice to us as Members of Congress. These facilities are being paid for by Federal tax dollars, and the tax dollars of my constituents, in particular, in Houston, Texas. They have given no notice to local officials. We were not even aware that they were coming.

The site that is about to be seeking to be opened is in a concrete area. It is very difficult for any of us to see where these children would play and recreate. So we wonder: How we are going to treat children who are going to be thrown into these facilities with no access to what children need?

Then this ending of the temporary protected status, I ask my colleagues to join me on the legislation that I will be introducing for a 2-year extension, so that these individuals are not thrown into the devastation that will make them refugees, because they will be coming back, and they are now contributing citizens.

What do you do with a country that has a million people displaced, like in Guatemala? What do you do when we say that we are supposed to have values, and not only are we treating parents who are deeply pained—poorly, reprehensibly, and inhumane—by snatching their children, or not seeking to reunite those children who came unaccompanied? When I say that, obviously, not reunite them into a bad situation, but document—they are just being held in these institutions, 10,000 of them. They are just being held.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for being particularly gracious and yielding.

I want to have paid tribute in my words to little Roger in Brownsville, Texas, and little Leah in Brownsville, Texas, a 9-month-old and a 1-year-old. Even if they go to foster care, that is not their relative or their parent. Which of their parents will have their parental rights extinguished against their will and, unfortunately, have one of our courts say it is a right decision? Which of these people will be denied due process, because we have words from this administration that say: I want no lawyers or courts. I want Border Patrol and ICE?

Those are not judges and juries. That is not a component of due process. Law enforcement has its role, and then the judiciary has its role, and the rights of these individuals warrant that.

Mr. Speaker, I close with Ephesians 4:30–32: ''Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.''

And Galatians 5:22–23: ''But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.''

There could be no law against being humane to these children.

I am grateful to the Congressman for his leadership in the Congressional Black Caucus. We are not only talking about domestic issues here in the United States, but we have extended ourselves to talk about the pain that is transpiring in these mothers and fathers right now, at 9:10 p.m. eastern time, in these detention centers, without their children.

Mr. Speaker, over the last many weeks, the country has been horrified by the sights and sounds of children being separated from their parents, and Americans aghast at the realization that families are being torn apart in their name.

When I visited the border and the federal detention facilities that housed parents and children quarantined from one another, what I witnessed was horrific and was echoed in heartbreaking audio recordings released by the press revealing children crying, aching for their parents, as all face a fate uncertain, and one inconsistent with the American ideal.

I will never forget the little children I met during my visit to the border.

One baby, 9-month-old Roger, had been taken from his 19-year-old sister after she was prosecuted for crossing the border illegally.

Their mother is dead, now their family is gone.

This crisis is not just an immigration matter, nor is it just a foreign policy matter. It is a humanitarian crisis, executed by an administration that purports to be the champion of ''family values'' but whose actions do not actually value families.

But the President's attempt at attacking children and their caretakers is not one that only pertains to asylum seekers at the borders.

For the entirety of his term, the President and his administration have relentlessly targeted communities of color and the programs they have previously benefitted from.

This includes changes to school free lunch program eligibility, proposed cuts to Supplemental Security Income, the refusal to adopt comprehensive criminal justice reforms, one thing after another.

Just last week, the GOP chose to cut $150 billion over a decade from various safety net programs which include Medicare and cash assistance programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Supplemental Security Income.

And the House farm bill that Republicans passed, and which Democrats were unanimously in opposition to, will result in some 400,000 households losing SNAP benefits.

As well, thousands of children would also risk losing their enrollment in free and reduced-price school meal programs because of this.

The President and GOP have promised for years now to create a plan to improve health insurance for everybody.

But that promise has not been kept.

By passing a nearly $1.9 trillion tax law and repealing the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate, Republicans will increase health care premiums on children and families.

According to the CBO, 4 million more people will be without health insurance by 2019. By 2027, 13 million more people will be uninsured. Families' premiums will also increase by nearly 10 percent on average per year over the next decade.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has significantly improved the availability, affordability, and quality of health care for tens of millions of Americans, including millions who previously had no health insurance at all.

Americans are rightly frightened by Republican attempts to repeal the ACA without having in place a superior new plan that maintains comparable coverages and comparable consumer choices and protections.

It is beyond dispute that the ''Pay More For Less'' plan proposed by House Republicans a few months ago fails this test miserably.

The Republican ''Pay More For Less Act'' is a massive tax cut for the wealthy, paid for on the backs of America's most vulnerable, the poor and working class households.

This ''Robin Hood in reverse'' bill is unprecedented and breathtaking in its audacity—no bill has ever tried to give so much to the rich while taking so much from the poor and working class.

This Republican scheme gives gigantic tax cuts to the rich, and pays for it by taking insurance away from 24 million people and raising costs for the poor and middle class.

It is despicable and shameful that those elected to serve their people would rather see their pockets full than their constituents healthy and well.

An Administration that cared about ''family values'' would not be working so hard to repeal a healthcare program that has insured

nine out of ten Americans and saved families with genetic diseases and pre-existing conditions thousands of dollars in debt.

In 1968, African Americans were about 5.4 times as likely as whites to be in prison or jail; compared to today, African Americans are 6.4 times as likely as whites to be incarcerated, which is especially troubling given that whites are also much more likely to be incarcerated now than they were in 1968.

It is clear the inequalities and disparities that ignited hundreds of American cities in the 1960s still exist and have not been eliminated over the last half-century.

As Judge Learned Hand observed, ''If we are to keep our democracy, there must be one commandment: thou shalt not ration justice.''

Reforming the criminal justice system so that it is fairer and delivers equal justice to all persons is one of the great moral imperatives of our time.

For reform to be truly meaningful, we must look at every stage at which our citizens interact with the system—from policing in our communities and the first encounter with law enforcement, to the charging and manner of attaining a conviction, from the sentence imposed to reentry and collateral consequences.

The need for meaningful prison and sentencing reform cannot be overstated because being the world's leader in incarceration is neither morally nor fiscally sustainable for the United States, or the federal government, the nation's largest jailer.

For individuals who have paid their debt, the reentry process is paved with tremendous, and often insurmountable, obstacles resulting in recidivism rates as high as 75 percent in some areas.

More must be done to ensure that the emphasis on incarceration is matched with an equal emphasis on successful reentry so that the approximately 630,000 individuals who reenter society each year are prepared to be successful in civilian life.

This is why I have also strongly supported and cosponsored legislation that will allow those with a criminal conviction to have a fair chance to compete for jobs with federal agencies and contractors.

I have also been working for many years to stop the over-criminalization of our young people.

Today, more and more young children are being arrested, incarcerated, and detained in lengthy out-of-home placements.

Harsh and lengthy penalties handed down to young offenders increase their risk of becoming physically abused, emotionally traumatized, and reduce their chance of being successfully reintegrated back into their communities.

I have introduced and supported legislation to help reform how youth and juveniles are treated to reduce contact and recidivism within the juvenile and criminal justice system; to help protect them from a system that turns them into lifelong offenders.

Just as we need to minimize the conviction of innocent people, we must address the unnecessary loss of life that can result from police and civilian interactions.

Effective law enforcement requires the confidence of the community that the law will be enforced impartially and equally.

That confidence has been eroded substantially in recent years by numerous instances of excessive use of lethal force.

There is no higher priority than improving the peacefulness of these interactions and rebuilding the trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve and protect.

At what point will Republicans step away from the tyrant of their party and make changes that will actually benefit the communities they represent, to stop fighting the disenfranchised and instead fight FOR the disenfranchised?

Now more than ever, the Trump Administration and the GOP have shown how inhumane they are when it comes to dealing with marginalized individuals.

This has become crystal clear in the span of two weeks when the public was finally made aware of the policies in place at our Southern borders.

While the President purported to end the practice of separating families with his Executive Order signed on Wednesday, thousands of children have been torn apart from their families and sent to various pockets of the country, often under cover of night, without any indication to their parents as to their whereabouts, or a plan to reunite them.

In my home state of Texas, a migrant who was separated from his family committed suicide while in federal detention.

A mother who, while breastfeeding her young child when both were in federal detention, had her child ripped away from her arms.

This cannot be how we make America great again; this is how we make America hateful again.

The Trump Administration is utterly failing in its basic duty to treat all persons with dignity and compassion, and is making a mockery of our national values and reputation as a champion of human rights.

We are a great country with a long and noble tradition of providing sanctuary to the persecuted and oppressed.

We are also a nation of families, from all shapes and sizes.

From the 16-year-old girl and her single mom who desperately depend on the benefits SNAP provides.

To the 19-year-old girl who must now become the sole guardian for her baby brother, in a country she prays will offer her peace and refuge (and return her brother to her).

It is in that spirit that we should act.

It is for them that we must all stand together in the face of injustice.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a copy of an Op-Ed entitled ''We Must Cease the Inhumane Practice of Separating Families Apprehended on the Border'' in The Hill newspaper.

WE MUST CEASE THE INHUMANE PRACTICE OF SEPARATING FAMILIES APPREHENDED ON THE BORDER

[From The Hill, June 12, 2018]

(BY REP. SHEILA JACKSON LEE (D-TEXAS), OPINION CONTRIBUTOR)

Every day hundreds of persons, ranging from infants and toddlers to adolescents and adults, flee violence, oppression, and economic desperation from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, seeking safe harbor in the United States. They are not criminals or terrorists; they are refugees seeking asylum. While they hope to receive asylum, none of us expected that they would be treated as criminals or that their children would be forcibly separated from them. I cannot think of a situation more devastating than having the government forcibly separate a parent from their child to a place unknown, for a fate uncertain, absent any form of communication. But shamefully that is exactly what is happening under this administration.

Reports indicate that as many as 700 children have been taken from adults claiming to be their parents since October 2017, including more than 100 children under the age of 4. This startling fact comes after Acting Assistant Secretary Steven Wagner of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) testified before the Senate in April 2018 that during a review of more than 7,600 unaccompanied immigrant children who had recently arrived and been placed with a sponsor, officials at the agency were unable to determine the precise whereabouts of 1,475 children.

This is unconscionable and unacceptable.

This administration's practice of separating children from their parents inexplicably turns accompanied children into unaccompanied children, with all of the attendant risks and dangers, including human trafficking. In 2014, the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations reported that ''over a period of 4 months, HHS allegedly placed a number of UACs in the hands of a ring of human traffickers who forced them to work on egg farms in and around Marion, Ohio. The minor victims were forced to work six or seven days a week, twelve hours per day. The traffickers repeatedly threatened the victims and their families with physical harm, and even death, if they did not work or surrender their entire paychecks.''

What is even more reprehensible is to this day, the Trump administration maintains that the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) is not legally responsible for children after they are released from ORR care. This line of thinking allows such gross negligence to take place in the first place. As the Founder and Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus and as a parent and grandparent, this is unacceptable.

Studies have documented that when young children are traumatically removed from their parents, their physical and mental health and well-being suffers. The effects of these traumatic experiences—especially in children who have already faced serious adversity are unlikely to be short-lived, and can likely last a lifetime. This is exacerbated when the child in custody speaks a language that is not English or Spanish. Although the government has a legal obligation to provide reasonable language services to unaccompanied minors, many children arriving to the U.S. speak indigenous languages and have little or no translation assistance provided by the U.S. government.

The Trump administration's ''zero-tolerance'' policy does not make our nation safer or more secure, nor is it a solution to the problem of illegal immigration and refugees seeking asylum. It is, however, monstrously cruel, inhumane, and shameful and makes a mockery of America's reputation as the most welcoming and generous nation on earth.

United Nations Office spokesperson Ravina Shamdasani recently condemned the Trump administration's treatment of unaccompanied minors coming to the United States saying that ''the use of immigration detention and family separation as a deterrent runs counter to human rights standards and principles''.

The last time this nation had policies that promoted the forcible separation of children from newly arrived persons was slavery: a dark chapter in this nation's history that we should not revisit. Today, the parents of these thousands of children will not be deterred from finding ways to reunite with their children, even reentering the United States under the threat of imprisonment. It

would be unconscionable to prosecute parents under these circumstances. There must be strong and aggressive congressional oversight of this administration's immigration enforcement.

The Trump administration's policy should cease and desist immediately. National Policy regarding immigration legislation should not create greater fear for families already traumatized by intolerable conditions in their home countries. U.S. immigration policy should not deter refugees from seeking asylum within our borders. We should welcome mothers carrying their babies to a safe haven and assure the safety of their children.

I will soon be introducing legislation prohibiting the separation of children from their families absent a health or safety risk. The legislation will also provide that these children the right to be represented by counsel and that translation services be available at all legal proceedings at all stages.

As we have seen with the recent volcanic activity and earthquakes in Guatemala, the United States should be seeking ways to help its neighbors in the Southern Hemisphere. The Trump administration is utterly failing in its basic duty to treat all persons with dignity and compassion. Rather, it is making a mockery of our national values and reputation as a champion of human rights.

This crisis is not just an immigration matter, nor is it just a foreign policy matter. It is a humanitarian crisis, executed by an administration that purports to be the champion of 'family values' but whose actions do not actually value families.

We are a great country with a long and noble tradition of providing sanctuary to the persecuted and oppressed. And it is in that spirit that we should act. We can do it; after all, we are Americans.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, can you tell me how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK). The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 1¾ minutes remaining.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask one quick question then.

Ms. JACKSON LEE has visited some of these locations. Can she describe—because I haven't been there, or maybe for people who haven't—exactly what is going on in those centers.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it is a painful experience, as I indicated. Toddlers don't speak. They are standing still, as has been evidenced by Members who have gone. I saw two little babies. Leah, a little older, fussy, playing on the floor, didn't want anyone to touch her. And Roger wanted someone to touch him. Mothers in cages, other mothers in a detention center in Los Fresno, nine of them from Honduras, each and every one had a child taken, and they were crying.

But the crux of this is that they don't know where the child is, and the child does not know where they are. These centers are being put up. One that already exists in my community has been charged with abusing children: throwing them down on the floor and giving them medication that they do not want; in essence, giving them medication to keep them quiet.

I know there are good people—everyone wants to talk about good people in their own State—but these are inhumane conditions. The greatest pain that I can say that you would see is men and women who are on the verge of deportation, they don't know what is happening, but they don't have their children. They are going back without their children.

Then you also see these large warehouses with thousands of little kids from 10 to 17, but they have been there for a while. They are unaccompanied children, and we have no accounting of these children.

That is what we are seeing. That is, I think, a shame on this government, and we can do better. We have been a refuge for refugees. There is a way to orderly do this.

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I want to end with that comment by the great gentlewoman from the State of Texas on Chairman RICHMOND's leadership of the Congressional Black Caucus. There is no better way to end than that comment.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans continue to profess that "family values" form the bedrock of their decision making. Yet, time and time again there is action being taken to the contrary. We have seen that the same "family values" that Republicans claim to have are not evident in the debates here on the floor, the legislation brought forth, and ultimately what is voted on in Congress.

Whether the topic is food nutrition for our children, Supplemental Security Income benefits for older Americans, or immigration policies, the average American family does not stand to benefit from many of the proposals considered by my Republican colleagues. Even when it comes down to the physical well-being of our citizens, Republicans have shown through their actions that they value profits more than lowering the cost of health care for millions of Americans. In fact, the recent corporate tax bill passed by the Republican party is have directly associated with a 15% spike in premiums at the expense of middle- and working-class Americans. The nonpartisan CBO also reported that another 3 million will be pushed off their coverage altogether.

I have even greater concerns as to how House Republicans are strengthening families while the GOP Farm Bill that passed last week will kick at least 2 million people off food stamps, and cut total food stamp benefits by more than $23 billion. Meanwhile, Republicans refused to include limits on subsidies provided for crop insurance—one of the few federal programs without eligibility caps or payment limits. Moreover, Supplemental Security Income is truly a provider of last resort and is vital for those who depend on it, yet my colleagues continue to impose devastating cuts to a program that benefits our most vulnerable. On the immigration front, Republicans are unwilling to allow migrant families to remain together and are instead separating them at our southern border.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few examples of how what we do here impacts millions of families all across the country. I believe many of my colleagues will agree with me that strong families form the foundation of a strong nation. Any decision on policy, whether economic or social, should be made to the overall benefit of the everyday American family. However, we must be extremely careful not to do so at the expense of millions of middle and lower class Americans who are already struggling to get by.

TAX REFORM BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. BROOKS) is recognized until 10 p.m. as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a number of my colleagues from Indiana and Ohio, the great Midwest, to celebrate the 6-month anniversary of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act being signed into law.

Our previous tax code was written more than 30 years ago and became broken, outdated, and overly complicated, and desperately needed to be reworked so Americans could receive much-needed relief. It was failing to support families with the resources they need in order to properly plan for their futures. Our tax code left those who were struggling to make ends meet behind.

But on December 22, 2017, that began to change when the President signed H.R. 1, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, into law. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act cut the individual tax rates for all individuals, allowing Americans to keep more of their hard-earned paychecks. It also slashed our corporate tax rate to ensure American businesses can remain competitive and compete on a global scale.

H.R. 1 also included provisions to support the most important engines of our economy: small businesses. By allowing businesses to fully write off the cost of new equipment in the first year, our updated and revamped tax code provides small businesses more money up front to quickly reinvest back into improving their operations, hiring new workers, and increasing pay and/or bonuses of current workers.

In 6 short months, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is already working for those who need it most, our country's hard-working middle class families and workers, allowing Americans across the country, and in Indiana, to keep more of their income.

For the typical family of four nationwide earning the median family income of $73,000, with this new law, they will now receive a tax cut of $2,059. In the Fifth District of Indiana—central Indiana, which I represent—the average

family of four is saving even more than that, at about $2,590, and the average single person is saving about $1,716 dollars.

These savings allow people to put money aside for things like continued education; payments toward a new home; and, overall, provide relief by making the cost of living just that much more manageable.

Additionally, more than $4 billion in bonuses have been given out to employees all across the country—$4 billion. Our Nation's unemployment has fallen to the lowest in 17 years, an unemployment rate of 3.8 percent as of May of this year.

□ 2115

Market confidence is also high. Our economy is booming, with 63 percent of small businesses saying they feel optimistic about the direction of our economy and 77 percent of manufacturers are planning on hiring new employees.

This is good news, because when our economy grows, everyone benefits.

A constituent of mine from Pendleton, who owns a restaurant, recently told me that instead of having to shut down for several days for repairs when a vital piece of his kitchen equipment broke, he was able to purchase a newer, more efficient model and remain open thanks to the new expensing provisions in the tax law.

I also heard from a Hoosier who came to D.C. with NFIB who is now able to provide his employees health insurance thanks to the savings he has seen through the savings for small businesses resulting from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. This critical benefit has helped him retain workers—he, I recall, had eight employees—and is allowing him to recruit even better talent to further grow his operations.

These stories are just two of millions from across the country showing just how much tax reform changes people's lives for the better and will provide certainty and optimism for much brighter futures.

Still more good news is to come as Americans file their taxes next April for the first time using the new system.

Mr. Speaker, I am really pleased that I have several colleagues here both from Indiana and from Ohio who have come to share their stories about their constituents and the good things that are happening in their districts.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BANKS). Mr. BANKS represents Indiana's northeastern Third District and is serving in his first term in Congress. I thank Congressman BANKS for being here.

Mr. BANKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Chairwoman BROOKS, for her attention to the positive effects of tax cuts on our Nation's economy, especially back home in Indiana.

Mr. Speaker, when this body was debating the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, we were told that 3 percent growth was impossible. We were told that the middle class and small businesses would not see any benefits. And we were told that manufacturing jobs would never come back.

Mr. Speaker, all of these so-called experts were dead wrong.

Since December, the U.S. economy has been growing at 2.9 percent and the Atlanta Federal Reserve bank estimates that growth this quarter will exceed 4 percent.

This is hardly the ''secular stagnation'' that so many on the left insisted was the inescapable future for the U.S. economy.

The bottom line is this: the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has unleashed record growth by lowering taxes on America's families and businesses.

When I am back home in northeast Indiana, I am constantly hearing good news as a result of tax reform.

In Bluffton, 20/20 Plastics is increasing annual wages by $1,200 and looking to invest in new manufacturing facilities in 2019.

In Fort Wayne, Quake Manufacturing is adding $1,000 bonuses and dental insurance for its employees.

Hoosiers across northeast Indiana have experienced the benefits just from turning on their lights, as Northern Indiana Public Service Company requested that customers' utility rates be lowered.

It is no secret why this is happening: Washington is taking a page out of Indiana's playbook.

During my time as a State senator, I was proud to work with Governors Mitch Daniels and MIKE PENCE to significantly lower taxes on individuals and businesses.

As a result, Indiana has one of the strongest economies in the country, with an unemployment rate of 3.2 percent and a labor force participation rate well above the national average.

Unemployment claims are at a historic low, and Indiana consistently ranks as one of the top States for business investment and economic growth.

For example, the annual report ''Rich States/Poor States'' ranks Indiana as having the country's third best economic outlook, while CNBC has consistently ranked the Hoosier state as one of the best places in the country to do business.

Finally, Indiana continues to be a manufacturing powerhouse, with 536,000 Hoosiers employed in the industry, and this number will only grow thanks to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Monthly manufacturing job gains have more than doubled under Republican control, with over two-thirds of manufacturers creating new jobs to fill.

Even more impressive, 86 percent of manufacturing firms plan to increase capital investments thanks to the tax cuts passed by Republicans.

As the district with the most manufacturing workers in the country, this is great news for Hoosiers as companies across northeast Indiana are hiring more employees and increasing wages.

Additionally, 47 percent of U.S. small businesses plan to use their tax savings to increase business investments.

We know from the data that there is a 99 percent correlation between business investment and wages, and there is no question that the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has spurred business investment.

This was the largest increase of wages since mid-2009.

Mr. Speaker, some have said the good news has amounted to crumbs and have promised to undo all of the gains we have seen from tax reform.

We owe it to the American people to make sure that that does not happen, but instead, we need to make these tax cuts permanent.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH), who represents the Ninth Congressional District in southern Indiana. He is a gentleman who has done business for many years.

Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairwoman for hosting this very important Special Order, and I am so glad that we are talking about the tremendous benefits that we have seen from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act passed just over 6 months ago.

During the last 6 months, we have heard a lot of impressive statistics about the national economy. We have heard about unemployment being down to 3.8 percent. We have heard about second quarter GDP being projected at in excess of 4 percent. We have heard about there being more available jobs than there are available workers in this country for the first time since the Labor Department has been keeping that statistic.

It is really impressive what the national economy has been doing over the past 6 months, but what matters most to me and what matters most to Hoosiers back home in the Ninth District is, what it is doing for them; what it is doing for their small businesses; what it is doing for their pocketbooks; what it is doing for their families; and what it is doing for their communities.

In Ellettsville, Joe said:

Per month, my wife and I alone will receive over $200, and for our family, that really helps us out. That is groceries for an entire week.

Down in New Albany, Will said:

As a small businessowner, I am now able to invest more in our company and employ more qualified people.

These are just two stories of what I hear day in and day out when I am traveling about the district.

When I go to townhalls, I hear about the tax reform. When I go to small businesses, I hear about the tax reform. When I go and visit families at their farms, I hear about tax reform's impact.

I want to ensure that we continue to see the impressive national statistics, but also continue to hear the great stories about how this bill, how the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, made a difference in individual Hoosiers' lives.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from southern Indiana for sharing.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS). He is from central southern Ohio's 15th District.

He is a dedicated soldier. I understand Mr. STIVERS has been a long time in the Army National Guard, actually over 30 years, and is now a brigadier general in the Ohio Army National Guard. I thank him for that service and ask that he please share with us the stories he has been hearing about how it has been impacting those in the Buckeye State.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Indiana, the Chair of the House Ethics Committee, for putting together this Special Order so we can talk about what is going on with tax reform.

Mr. Speaker, the numbers don't lie. Tax reform is growing our economy and providing more opportunities for all Americans. It has been just over 6 months since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was signed into law, and we are already seeing results.

First and foremost, our economy is growing at nearly 4 percent, a remarkable number, despite the Congressional Budget Office's pessimistic prediction of only 1.9 percent growth.

When I started in Congress in 2011, unemployment was 9 percent. Due largely to our tax reform and regulatory reform, our business community is now creating jobs. Unemployment has fallen to 3.8 percent, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, an 18-year low.

Moreover, not only are businesses hiring, but they are reinvesting in their employees. They are giving Americans more money in their pocket. In fact, 4 million workers and counting have received bonuses and seen more money sent to their 401(k)s, and 90 percent of Americans have more money in their paychecks as a result of tax reform.

I am seeing the benefits across my district, with companies such as Nationwide Insurance, R+L Carriers, eCycle, and Fifth Third Bank giving bonuses, pay raises, and raising contributions to retirement.

These benefits are real and make a tangible difference for hardworking families in the 15th District and it has given them an opportunity to reinvest in their future.

The economy is booming, and people are noticing. Consumer confidence is at an 18-year high. We are seeing wage growth, a pay raise for the American worker, for many of them for the first time in 10 years.

We were also told that the tax bill would hurt the housing market; however, home prices are surging. According to the S&P, the home price index has increased 6.5 percent.

The statistics and stories go on and on, but, Mr. Speaker, you just can't deny the numbers. Tax reform is working for the 15th District, it is working for the State of Ohio, and it is working for America.

What I have heard from some of my constituents: Carolyn in Grover City, who is a budding entrepreneur, is using her tax cut to start a small business. Tamela in Amanda says that it just helps her breathe easier having a little extra money in her pocket, knowing that the government is taking a little bit smaller bite. She has got a little bit more money to make things balance.

It has only been 6 months since the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act took effect, and I look forward to seeing how Ohioans and Americans continue to benefit.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for his comments. When he shared about people breathing easier, I know that a bank teller that I spoke with in Sheridan, Indiana, shared with me that that extra in her paycheck is allowing her to pay more for daycare rather than her husband having to work quite so hard at that second job. So it is helping her pay their daycare bill and it is helping them breathe a little bit easier.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS). Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS represents eastern Washington's Fifth District.

I have the pleasure of working alongside her on the Energy and Commerce Committee, and we have heard about 1 million more jobs created, 4 million more people receiving bonuses, 90 percent of people with more money in their paychecks.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing how tax cuts are impacting the State of Washington.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman very much for yielding and for hosting us this evening and bringing us together to talk about the positive impact of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, one part that is contributing to our booming economy.

Last Friday was the 6-month anniversary of the passage and the signing of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act into law. It is the most sweeping tax reform in more than 3 decades, and our goal was pretty simple: more jobs, bigger paychecks, and fairer taxes. And as this law continues to be implemented, that is what we are seeing.

Since we passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, we have been able to create more than 1 million jobs; the unemployment rate is now at 3.8 percent, that is the lowest in 50 years, since 1969; unemployment for Blacks and Hispanics is at the lowest level ever on record; compensation increases for small business workers are at the highest level in 20 years; consumer confidence is close to an 18-year high; people are the most hopeful that they have been in 17 years about finding that good-paying job; and for the first time in our history, there are more jobs available than people that are seeking and looking for those jobs.

There was a recent survey of manufacturers that found 72 percent of manufacturers report that they plan to increase employee wages and benefits; 77 percent plan to hire more workers; 86 percent say that they have already planned expanded investments.

This is the economic comeback that Americans and their families have long waited for. With results we promised, like bigger paychecks and lower utility bills, because of tax reform, people are better off.

So often policy becomes about the numbers. And these are great numbers and we are proud of these numbers.

But now I would like to focus a little bit more on what tax reform means, focus on why it matters.

□ 2130

The why is the real people in eastern Washington, hardworking men and women in eastern Washington and all across this country who now have the opportunity for a better life, thanks to this progrowth policy.

For weeks now, my colleagues have come to the House floor to share stories of small businesses that are expanding, moms and dads that can spend more time with their children, families taking vacations together for the first time, and so many more stories. Those stories are the same stories that I hear in eastern Washington.

A few weeks ago, I was talking with a family in Spokane, Washington, and they told me that they are seeing $400 more a month in take-home pay. They are grateful for that extra cushion because their daughter is living with a disability and, given her needs, they never know what the expenses may be. With nearly 5,000 more dollars in their pocket this year, they are more confident about the future and their ability to care for her.

I also met a dad who manages the Starbucks in downtown Spokane. He was so excited about the announcement of bigger paychecks, more take-home pay, better benefits, because he had just had a son. He and his wife had just given birth 4 months earlier, and he was so hopeful about this future.

When the withholding tables changed in February, I received a call in my office from a woman who could barely speak because she was so excited about what an extra $40 in her paycheck was going to mean for her. And I quote her: ''I just got my paycheck for the first time, and I am getting $47.98 more than I did in the past, which is about $1,200 more a year. For me, they are not crumbs. It's more money to help me put food on the table. I'm so happy, I wanted to tell everybody, the whole world, that these tax cuts work.''

So to some, these may be crumbs, but to hardworking men and women, it makes a difference in being able to support their families.

I had another person contact my office thinking that their H.R. system had glitched when they saw $100 more in their paycheck, and he said: ''For

me this will be $2,400 a year. That's real money, to buy groceries, fill the car up with gas, or take the family on a weekend trip.''

Tax reform is changing lives and, despite all the good, all these milestones and positive headlines, our colleagues across the aisle still voted ''no,'' and worse, they now are wanting to take it away.

For working moms and dads, we doubled the child tax credit, preserved the adoption tax credit, expanded 529 accounts to help with the cost of raising children. For moms like me who are raising a child with a disability, I was proud to get my ABLE 2.0 provisions included so that now a child with disabilities can go explore work, find a job, and take those earnings and put them into their ABLE account.

ABLE to Work is going to allow individuals to save more of their own money, maybe go get an internship or a part-time job. My ABLE Financial Planning Act will allow families of those with disabilities to roll over funds from a child's savings account to an ABLE account if their child becomes disabled. These provisions are going to help families who have children with disabilities live full and independent lives, and I was proud to be a part of that.

For the millions of women who recently received a pay increase, including entry-level employees at Wheatland Bank in Spokane, Washington, they can now invest more of what they earn in their pay for their education, retirement, everyday expenses to travel and chase their dreams.

In fact, more than 600 companies have passed down benefits from tax reform to their employees. For people and small-business owners in my district, this means real relief. Ninety percent of people are seeing more money in their pocket every month. For the average family of four, it is $2,000 a year.

These are real stories from real people who are benefiting, and we are just getting started.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Washington, and I love her message of more jobs as she just talked about bigger paychecks, fairer taxes. It is happening in her State and all across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON), who, prior to coming to Congress, also served our country. He retired as a lieutenant colonel from the United States Air Force, and I am very fortunate because I get to serve with him, also, on the Energy and Commerce Committee.

I ask the gentleman to please share with us how the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is helping eastern Ohio.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Mrs. BROOKS from Indiana, for hosting this Special Order this evening to talk about this very important topic, and I am really proud to join all of our colleagues tonight to talk about the effects of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. I want to focus my comments on the good news coming out of eastern and southeastern Ohio as a result of these historic tax reforms.

Just last week, we celebrated the 6-month anniversary of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act being signed into law. In just these few months, we have seen consumer, business, and manufacturing confidence at or near record levels, more money back into the pockets of hardworking Americans, and unemployment rates at some of the lowest levels we have seen in nearly two decades.

In the Sixth District of Ohio, since the start of 2017, unemployment rates have dropped significantly in each of the 18 counties I represent. Now, we know there is still more work to do, but the trends are moving in a positive direction.

Many of our friends on the other side of the aisle said the sky would fall when we passed this landmark legislation but, in fact, the opposite has happened.

Just last week, one of my constituents from Marietta, Ohio, stopped by my office to tell me he is receiving an additional $80 each week in his paycheck due to tax reform. That is an additional $320 per month, or $3,840 per year. That is even more than the average of what we thought was going to happen for hardworking families. He said he uses this money to help pay his car payments, and he expressed his gratitude for that extra money he has in his pocket to help him make those payments.

I hear these stories every day when I travel my home district in eastern and southeastern Ohio, and I can tell you firsthand, we are still seeing the benefits from the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and we will for a long time to come.

The results are real, and it is encouraging to see what happens when we refuse to accept the previous administration's slow-growth economic policies as some kind of new normal.

There is no doubt: The hardworking men and women of eastern and southeastern Ohio are optimistic about the positive economic growth under our new Tax Code, but they are not the only ones. This positive outlook is happening all over America.

You know, it is about time that Washington creates an environment where our free enterprise, market-driven system puts money into the American people's pocket rather than Washington standing there with its hand out taking money out of their pockets, and that is just what the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act did.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for sharing with us how it is impacting eastern and southeastern Ohio.

I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. DAVIDSON), who represents the Eighth Congressional District and also served his country as a United States Army Ranger and had been in business prior to coming here to the people's House.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairwoman BROOKS for putting this Special Order together and taking time to call attention to some good news. Good news is out there. It is hard to find sometimes on the news, but tax reform, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is all about good news.

What is astonishing is the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was already having an impact even before it became law. The hope of the cuts that were to come were causing our economy to grow at nearly double the rate that it was under the previous administration.

And now we have seen deeds, not just words. We have seen actions transform the idea of tax cuts into enacted tax cuts, things that have transformed the expectation of 1½ percent growth, the path that had our economy stagnating, take-home pay stagnating, and no hope for the growth that our parents once knew to be part of the American future.

Today, we are seeing 3 percent growth. We may even see more than 4 percent growth in this quarter. The experts said this wasn't going to happen and, instead, what we have seen is the power of ideas, the power of those ideas becoming law, and now we are seeing that show up in our economy.

What does that mean for families in Ohio? Hardworking families are getting more home take-home pay. They are creating more opportunities. The ability to change jobs and find a better-paying one with better benefits is out there because everyone I am talking to is hiring.

This is great news for Ohio, a State that just a short time ago was reeling from over 400,000 jobs lost, a fleeting economy, and a State savings account that was raided to just 89 cents left in Ohio's treasury.

Today, Ohio's manufacturers are hiring. In fact, nearly every company that I have met with is hiring, and their problem is they can't hire fast enough. They are looking for more good workers, and this is creating better opportunities for hardworking Ohioans and better opportunities for American companies. Because we didn't just cut taxes, we reformed taxes, and we made changes that make it so companies are investing in Ohio, in America again, and this is creating these jobs.

Places like Staub Manufacturing Solutions have seen an uptick in sales, employment, and optimism. They have grown their team from 23 to 37 employees over the last year, and they recently expanded by acquiring a new building.

Hartzler Propeller in Troy, Ohio, is experiencing the same optimism and continues to grow and invest in the future of their employees and their investment in Ohio.

How does this happen?

The framework has to be right. It is not more government or less government; it is the right kind of government. It is the kind of government that has made America the world's land of opportunity.

America has always attracted the best goods, services, capital, ideas, and people that flow freely and flourish here in America because we have the certainty of a good regulatory framework, not an excessive, burdensome regulatory framework. We have seen that burden lifted, and we have seen it complemented by strong tax reform, important tax cuts, and we have seen the result is more jobs, more than a million created in the 6 months since this bill became law.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is a constructive policy for jobs, for prosperity, and for a promising economic future for everyone in America.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for his comments, and I agree with him. Everyone is hiring. There are so many job openings right now.

As the gentleman said, there are a million new jobs. Everyone is competing at a higher level, and they have to compete in order to retain those employees in order to keep those employees happy.

So things are really buzzing along, and I thank the gentleman for being here this evening and sharing what is going on in southern Ohio.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, but as we have heard from Members from Indiana, Ohio, and Washington, because everyone is hiring and people have to compete, there are companies throughout Indiana, companies like First Merchants Bank, one of the first in Indiana to announce they were going to have an hourly wage increase and $500 bonus for nonsenior management; a company in my district, one of the larger employers, Hoosier Park Casino, all employees received a $500 bonus after the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was announced; Fifth Third Bank, $1,000 bonuses to over 13,000 employees, and they also raised the minimum wage.

These are the types of stories that we have heard, whether it is from small companies or from large, national companies and companies that do business all across the country. They are competing for workers, and when they are competing for workers, the workers and the employees are winning because everyone is hiring and everyone is trying to compete.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all of my colleagues for the opportunity to highlight the benefits of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Every Member of Congress has this duty to their constituents and to try to make sure that we promote and make sure that the benefits of historic tax reform have extended all across the country, as we have heard today, and have impacted Americans from all walks of life.

Moving forward, we have to continue to implement these types of policies that will encourage economic growth, create those jobs, ensure that our Tax Code continues to support the policies to make sure that the welfare of American citizens in the 21st century is at the highest so that we can have the best for all Americans in the 21st century.

I want to thank all my colleagues for taking the time to participate this evening, as we have gone late into the evening. I look forward to working for the benefit of all of our constituents all across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to have been a part of the passage of this historic Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CURTIS (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and June 26 on account of his primary election in Utah.

Mr. DONOVAN (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today and June 26 on account of his primary election in New York.

Mr. CUELLAR (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today until 6:50 p.m. on account of flight delay.

Mr. PAYNE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 45 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, June 26, 2018, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5292. A letter from the Executive Assistant to the Director of Army Financial Services, USAMCOM, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Military Payment Certificates [Docket ID: USA-2018-HQ-0007] (RIN: 0702-AA91) received June 21, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5293. A letter from the Alternate OSD FRLO, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Policy on Technical Surveillance Countermeasures [Docket ID: DOD-2017-OS-0050] (RIN: 0790-AJ59) received June 21, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Armed Services.

5294. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's Major final rule — Definition of ''Employer'' Under Section 3(5) of ERISA--Association Health Plans (RIN: 1210-AB85) received June 21, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

5295. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security and Emergency Response, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's report to Congress titled, ''Vulnerability of the Electric Grid to an Electromagnetic Pulse and the Potential Impact on Electric Power Delivery and Reliability''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5296. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's NUREG Revision — Consolidated Guidance About Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance About Possession Licenses for Production of Radioactive Material Using an Accelerator (NUREG-1556, Volume 21, Revision 1) received June 21, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5297. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to transnational criminal organizations that was declared in Executive Order 13581 of July 24, 2011, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5298. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting a report on the value of sales of defense equipment for the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2018, pursuant to Secs. 36(a) and 26(b) of the Arms Export Control Act, the March 24, 1979, Report by the Committee on Foreign Affairs (H. Rept. 96-70), and the July 31, 1981, Seventh Report by the Committee on Government Operations (H. Rept. 97-214); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

5299. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting an action on nomination, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5300. A letter from the Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, transmitting the 2017 management report of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106(a)(1); Public Law 97-258 (as amended by Public Law 101-576, Sec. 306(a)) (104 Stat. 2854); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5301. A letter from the Senior Vice President/Chief Accounting Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines, transmitting the 2017 Management Report of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines including financial statements, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106(a)(1); Public Law 97-258 (as amended by Public Law 101-576, Sec. 306(a)); (104 Stat. 2854); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

5302. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 150916863-6211-02] (RIN: 0648-XE832) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5303. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska [Docket No.: 160920866-7167-02] (RIN: 0648-XF798) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5304. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2017 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for South Atlantic Vermilion Snapper [Docket No.: 130312235-3658-02] (RIN: 0648-XF730) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5305. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Northern Rockfish in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 161020985-7181-02] (RIN: 0648-XF296) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5306. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Exchange of Flatfish in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 161020985-7181-02] (RIN: 0648-XF733) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5307. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Trimester 2 Georges Bank Cod Total Allowable Catch Area Closure; Updated 2017 Georges Bank Cod Annual Catch Limit for the Common Pool; Possession Prohibition for the Common Pool Fishery [Docket No.: 151211999-6343-02] (RIN: 0648-XF747) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5308. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 161020985-7181-02] (RIN: 0648-XF732) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5309. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2017 Commercial Accountability Measures and Closure for South Atlantic Greater Amberjack [Docket No.: 100812345-2142-03] (RIN: 0648-XF729) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5310. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Trip Limit Increase for the Common Pool Fishery [Docket No.: 151211999-6343-02] (RIN: 0648-XF256) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5311. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries Off West Coast States; Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery; 2017-2018 Biennial Specifications and Management Measures; Inseason Adjustments [Docket No.: 160808696-7010-02] (RIN: 0648-BG95) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5312. A letter from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries — SERO, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region; Amendment 37; Correction [Docket No.: 160906822-7547-02] (RIN: 0648-BG33) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5313. A letter from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab Fishery; 2017-2019 Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab Specifications [Docket No.: 160920861-7168-02] (RIN: 0648-XE900) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5314. A letter from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries/Alaska Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands; 2017 and 2018 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish [Docket No.: 161020985-7181-02] (RIN: 0648-XE989) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5315. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer [Docket No.: 161017970-6999-02] (RIN: 0648-XF722) received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5316. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting the Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act Report to Congress for May 2018, pursuant to 34 U.S.C. 50503(f); Public Law 114-12, Sec. 4(f); (129 Stat. 196); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

5317. A letter from the Director, National Legislative Division, American Legion, transmitting statements describing the financial condition of The American Legion as of December 31, 2017 and 2016 along with supplemental data; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

5318. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only — Changes in accounting periods and in methods of accounting [Rev. Proc. 2018-35] received June 20, 2018, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5319. A letter from the Chief Counsel, Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States, Department of Justice, transmitting the annual report for CY 2017 of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the United States, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 1622(c); Mar. 10, 1950, ch. 54, Sec. 3(c) (as amended by Aug. 9, 1955, ch. 645, Sec. 1); (69 Stat. 562) and 50 U.S.C. 4107; July 3, 1948, ch. 826, Sec. 9 (as amended by Public Law 89-348, Sec. 2(6)); (79 Stat. 1312); jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs and the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 5783. A bill to provide a safe harbor for financial institutions that maintain a customer account at the request of a Federal or State law enforcement agency; with an amendment (Rept. 115–780). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HENSARLING: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 6069. A bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to carry out a study on how virtual currencies and online marketplaces are used to buy, sell, or facilitate the financing of goods or services associated with sex trafficking or drug trafficking, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 115–781, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 5761. A bill to redesignate Golden Spike National Historic Site and to establish the Transcontinental Railroad Network; with an amendment (Rept. 115–782). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Ms. CHENEY: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 961. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6157) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2083) to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to reduce predation on endangered Columbia River salmon and other nonlisted species, and for other purposes (Rept. 115–783). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Energy and Commerce discharged from further consideration. H.R. 6069 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following

titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. GARAMENDI (for himself and Mr. HUNTER):

H.R. 6206. A bill to direct the Commandant of the Coast Guard to establish a Blue Technology center of expertise, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. ROYCE of California, and Mr. ENGEL):

H.R. 6207. A bill to support democracy and accountability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 6208. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to authorize additional funds to expand the nutritional assistance program in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; and to require the Secretary of Agriculture to permit such assistance to be provided by the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in the form of cash during periods for which the Secretary determines that access to such assistance is limited or unavailable as a result of a natural disaster; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 6209. A bill to amend the Fair Housing Act to provide that it is unlawful for any person engaging in a residential real estate-related transaction to discriminate against any person in making available such a transaction, or in the terms or conditions of such a transaction, because all or part of the person's income derives from a source located in Puerto Rico or any other territory of the United States, and for other purpose; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 6210. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide authority to the Administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration to provide a cash award to Administration employees with foreign language skills, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 6211. A bill to improve the collection and publication of statistics relating to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Oversight and Government Reform, Education and the Workforce, Agriculture, the Judiciary, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana:

H.R. 6212. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to ensure the safety of imported seafood; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana (for himself, Mr. ROKITA, Mrs. LESKO, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. NORMAN, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. MITCHELL, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. BABIN, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. DUNN, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. YOHO, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. ESTES of Kansas, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. JONES, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BARTON, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. RATCLIFFE, Mr. ROTHFUS, and Mr. ROUZER):

H.R. 6213. A bill to amend the Revised Statutes of the United States to prevent the use of the legal system in a manner that extorts money from State and local governments, and the Federal Government, and inhibits such governments' constitutional actions under the first, tenth, and fourteenth amendments; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 6214. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of Paul Laurence Dunbar; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 6215. A bill to revise the composition of the Zoning Commission for the District of Columbia so that the Commission will consist solely of members appointed by the government of the District of Columbia; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. TIPTON:

H.R. 6216. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3025 Woodgate Road in Montrose, Colorado, as the ''Sergeant David Kinterknecht Post Office''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. TIPTON:

H.R. 6217. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 241 N 4th Street in Grand Junction, Colorado, as the ''Deputy Sheriff Derek Geer Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN (for herself, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. POCAN):

H. Res. 960. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives in support of HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis research, education, and usage, and addressing the barriers to receiving this treatment, especially for communities of color, gay and bisexual men, and transgender people; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BIGGS (for himself, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. GAETZ, and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia):

H. Res. 962. A resolution condemning and censuring Maxine Waters, Representative of California's 43d Congressional District; to the Committee on Ethics.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey introduced a bill (H.R. 6218) for the relief of Judge Neringa Venckiene, who the Government of Lithuania seeks on charges related to her pursuit of justice against Lithuanian public officials accused of sexually molesting her young niece; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. GARAMENDI:

H.R. 6206.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 6207.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This resolution is enacted pursuant to the power granted in Congress under Article I, Section 1.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 6208.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

''The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States; . . .''

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 6209.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 and 18 of the U.S. Constitution, which provide as follows:

The Congress shall have Power [. . .]

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes; [. . .]—And

To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 6210.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 and 18 of the U.S. Constitution, which provide as follows:

The Congress shall have Power [. . .]

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes; [. . .]—And

To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico:

H.R. 6211.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 2 and Section 8, and the 14111 Amendment, Section 2 and Section 5 of the U.S. ConstitUtion, which provide as follows:

The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term often Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct.

To make all laws which shalt be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State . . . .

The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Further, the Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article IV, Section 3, which provides, in relevant part, as follows:

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any patticular State.

By Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana:
H.R. 6212.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3
By Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana:
H.R. 6213.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 9 (''The Congress shall have Power . . . To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court.'') and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (''The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.'').
By Ms. NORTON:
H.R. 6214.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.
By Ms. NORTON:
H.R. 6215.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 17 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.
By Mr. TIPTON:
H.R. 6216.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7, ''The Congress shall have Power to . . . establish Post Offices and Post Roads . . .'' In the Constitution, the power possessed by Congress embraces the regulation of the Postal System in the country. Therefore, the proposed legislation in naming a post office would fall under the powers granted to Congress in the Constitution.
By Mr. TIPTON:
H.R. 6217.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7, ''The Congress shall have Power to . . . establish Post Offices and Post Roads . . .'' In the Constitution, the power possessed by Congress embraces the regulation of the Postal System in this country. Therefore, the proposed legislation in naming a post office would fall under the powers granted to Congress in the Constitution.
By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:
H.R. 6218.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, section 8, clause 4 of the Constitution provides that Congress shall have power ''To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;''

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 99: Ms. BONAMICI and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 154: Mr. LOBIONDO and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 184: Mr. ARRINGTON.
H.R. 233: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 371: Mr. CRIST.
H.R. 502: Mr. GIANFORTE.
H.R. 632: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 852: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 936: Mr. CUELLAR and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 959: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1038: Mr. RUSSELL.
H.R. 1204: Mrs. WALORSKI.
H.R. 1300: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Mr. TED LIEU of California.
H.R. 1478: Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 1511: Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 1606: Mr. PAULSEN.
H.R. 1676: Mr. CLEAVER.
H.R. 1681: Mr. HIMES.
H.R. 1734: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SOTO, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mr. GARRETT.
H.R. 1788: Mr. COOK.
H.R. 1876: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania and Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 1904: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2043: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 2215: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.
H.R. 2282: Mr. LAMB.
H.R. 2309: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2432: Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 2472: Mr. LYNCH.
H.R. 2477: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 2515: Mr. PETERS and Mr. BIGGS.
H.R. 2589: Ms. NORTON and Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H.R. 2598: Mrs. DINGELL, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 2651: Mr. SOTO.
H.R. 2701: Mr. POLIQUIN and Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 2913: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 2946: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 2976: Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 3138: Mr. HASTINGS.
H.R. 3197: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 3325: Mr. RASKIN, Mr. POCAN, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. ROSS, Mr. BACON, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 3400: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 3891: Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Mr. SCHRADER.
H.R. 4143: Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. CASTRO of Texas.
H.R. 4444: Mr. MCEACHIN and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 4472: Mr. SOTO.
H.R. 4548: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 4573: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 4886: Mr. LONG, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. LOUDERMILK, and Mrs. BLACKBURN.
H.R. 4923: Mr. COOK.
H.R. 5034: Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 5129: Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. CLAY, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Mr. MESSER.
H.R. 5132: Mr. EVANS, Mr. REED, Mr. GOMEZ, and Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia.
H.R. 5145: Mr. TONKO and Mr. NADLER.
H.R. 5161: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H.R. 5248: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 5291: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 5389: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 5476: Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 5545: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. NEAL, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 5588: Miss RICE of New York, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 5595: Mr. ROSS.
H.R. 5634: Ms. PINGREE.
H.R. 5697: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 5724: Mr. MAST.
H.R. 5747: Mr. ROUZER.
H.R. 5768: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 5814: Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 5876: Mr. FLORES, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. FERGUSON.
H.R. 5881: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 5888: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 5976: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 5977: Mr. SCHNEIDER and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.
H.R. 5988: Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, and Mr. HOLDING.
H.R. 5996: Mr. NORCROSS.
H.R. 6014: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 6016: Mr. TONKO, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 6022: Mr. HARRIS and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 6031: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. COLE, and Mr. KNIGHT.
H.R. 6048: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 6075: Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN and Ms. KELLY of Illinois.
H.R. 6081: Mr. MCKINLEY and Mr. TURNER.
H.R. 6108: Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 6134: Mr. BRAT.
H.R. 6172: Mr. LANCE.
H.R. 6173: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 6174: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER.
H.R. 6178: Mr. PETERSON.
H.R. 6180: Ms. NORTON, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. BEYER, and Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 6183: Mr. UPTON, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mrs. MIMI WALTERS of California, Mr. POLIQUIN, Mr. YODER, Mr. TIPTON, Ms. STEFANIK, Ms. SINEMA, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 6184: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 6190: Mr. POSEY, Mr. BLUM, Mr. YOHO, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BURGESS, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 6193: Mr. MOULTON, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. BASS, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.
H.R. 6195: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H. Con. Res. 119: Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H. Res. 926: Mr. HIMES.
H. Res. 936: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.
H. Res. 941: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H. Res. 950: Mr. COURTNEY.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. YOUNG OF ALASKA

The amendment filed to H.R. 200 by me does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House Rule XXI.